



# IMPAIRED DRIVING

*Task Force Newsletter*



**Save a Life™**  
Texas Department of Transportation

## At the April 25, 2024 meeting of the Texas Impaired Driving Task Force, the Executive Committee provided the following updates:

### Executive Committee Member Changes

#### *Impaired Driving Data Executive Committee*

NHTSA has recommended that Texas should establish an impaired driving database. This effort will require data and input from several sources. Brian Grubbs, LEADRS, has graciously recommended stepping down from the TxIDTF Executive Committee. Jim Markham, Director of TxDOT's Crash Data Analysis Section, has agreed to serve as the Executive Committee member for Impaired Driving Data. Brian will continue to provide valuable representation of the LEADRS program on the TxIDTF and ultimately the establishment of an impaired driving database.

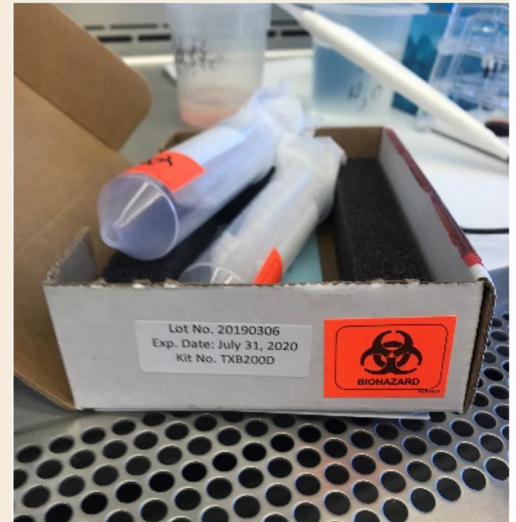
#### *Research Executive Committee*

Dr. Charles Mathias has accepted a position at Rice University and no longer has the capacity to participate on the TxIDTF. We appreciate his service and wish him the best with his new role. Dr. Troy Walden has agreed to serve as the Executive Committee member representing Research. Thank you to Dr. Walden for stepping in to fill this role!

### Forensic Testing

#### *Blood Kit Shortage Update*

In November 2023, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) began accepting blood kits from third-party vendors due to a shortage of kits from the DPS-approved vendor WorkQuest. As of April 2024, blood kits are back in stock at WorkQuest and DPS will only accept blood kits from third-party vendors for a few more months. Please spread the word to your local law enforcement that blood kits are back in stock at WorkQuest!

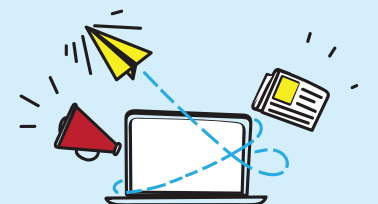


#### *Drug Toxicology Exceptional Item Update*

In the previous legislative session, DPS secured funding to increase the capacity of the crime laboratory and reduce the drug toxicology backlog. The hiring process and construction of new facilities is underway and expected to be completed in August 2025!

### Newsletter Additions

If you would you like to add anything to the next edition of the newsletter, please send your information to [c-adams@tti.tamu.edu](mailto:c-adams@tti.tamu.edu) or [e-shields@tti.tamu.edu](mailto:e-shields@tti.tamu.edu).



**Subcommittee Updates**

**Cannabis & Alcohol**

The TxIDTF has identified 101 businesses in Texas that allow for on-site consumption of THC (hemp derived cannabinoids) and alcohol in combination (as of April 2024). States that allow Adult-Use, Onsite Cannabis Consumption strictly prohibit alcohol and cannabis to be sold at the same location. In some adult use states businesses cannot hold both a liquor license and a cannabis license.

The TxIDTF has convened a subcommittee to address this concern by providing education on potential legislation and/or regulations for policymakers to consider. Recently, an interim legislative charge came out of the Lt. Governor’s Office, asking the State Affairs Committee to examine the sale of intoxicating hemp products. The committee has been asked to make recommendations to further regulate the sale of these products and stop retailers who market the products to children.



**Research**

The Research Subcommittee reviewed the article – *Risk of motor vehicle collision with cannabis and alcohol use among patients presenting for emergency care*. View all research subcommittee article reviews on the TxIDTF website [here](#).

- **Study Objective:** Examine the relationship between cannabis and alcohol use and motor vehicle collision (MVC) risk among patients in emergency departments (ED).

**Texas Data – Cannabis Category**  
2018-2022 Drivers in Motor Vehicle Crashes Involving Drugs

All Crash Severities (No Alcohol)	All Crash Severities With Alcohol Involved
1. Unknown - 33.4%	1. Unknown - 28%
2. Multiple Drugs - 12.4%	2. Multiple Drugs - 14.2%
3. Cannabis - 7.4%	3. Cannabis - 14.1%
Fatality & Serious Injury (No Alcohol)	Fatality & Serious Injury With Alcohol Involved
1. Multiple Drugs - 23.6%	1. Cannabis - 28.2%
2. Cannabis - 21.6%	2. Multiple Drugs - 24.7%



Information represents data collected from Texas Peace Officer's Crash Reports (CR-3) received and processed by the Texas Department of Transportation as of October 19, 2023.

- **Study Design:** Cross-sectional study of visits to EDs in Denver, CO, Portland, OR, and Sacramento, CA, by drivers who were involved in MVCs and presented with injuries (cases) and non-injured drivers (controls) who presented for medical care.
- **Study Outcomes:**
  - Alcohol use alone was consistently associated with elevated MVC risk.
  - Cannabis use alone (at all levels) was not consistently associated with elevated MVC risk.
  - Alcohol and Cannabis in combination were consistently associated with elevated MVC risk.
- **Findings:** Actual driving behavior and clinical signs of intoxication provide strong rationale for determining driving under the influence rather than a specific drug level threshold limit.

**Language Barriers**

The problem of language barriers in court ordered alcohol education was initially presented to the Texas Impaired Driving Task Force by Judge Hand, Potter County Court

at Law #2. Offenders with limited English proficiency who are assigned to court ordered alcohol education face substantial challenges with the communication needs required to complete a course.

Further complicating the matter is that instructors and program managers struggle to develop and distribute learning materials to students who lack or have limited ability to communicate in English. The TxIDTF convened a subcommittee to further discuss the issue of equity in DWI Education probation requirements for non-English/Spanish speakers.

A White Paper on Language Barriers in Court Ordered Alcohol Education was drafted. The purpose of the document is to 1) investigate the barriers to effective foreign language communication among defendants who have been ordered to attend and complete court ordered alcohol education as a condition of sentencing and 2) to assess and recommend potential solutions to address language barrier issues that both instructors and participants may experience during the delivery of court ordered alcohol education. The White Paper is currently under review by the subcommittee.

## Prevention

Nicole Holt, CEO of Texans for Safe and Drug-Free Youth, presented alcohol-impaired driving prevention strategies, using evidence-based approaches and strategic collaborations. Prevention strategies can be individual or environmental and target a variety of variables (see graphic below).

### Best Practice Recommendation with Strong Supporting Evidence:

Multicomponent Interventions with Community Mobilization (Impaired Driving Action Teams/Coalitions)

### Communities can adapt an Impaired Driving Action Team to:

- ✓ Identify stakeholders and strategic partnerships
- ✓ Review and assess evidence-based interventions
- ✓ Identify focus group areas (e.g., data improvement, public education/awareness, policy, enforcement/prosecution)
- ✓ Develop a workplan with short, medium, and long-term strategies
- ✓ Consider equity in all policy and program decisions

There should be a continual cycle of planning, implementation, and assessment.

### Prevention 101: What does alcohol use and impaired driving prevention look like?

1. Influencing policy and legislation;
2. Changing organizational practices and skills;
3. Fostering coalitions and networks;
4. Educating providers;
5. Promoting community engagement; and
6. Strengthening individual knowledge and skills.

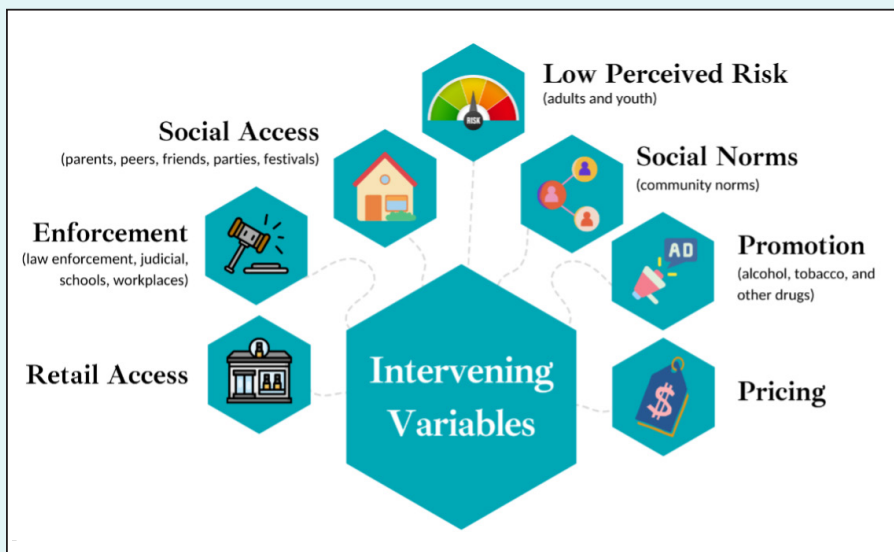


## LEADRS: Data Review

The LEADRS System now has over 180,000 cases statewide. LEADRS can be used as an educational tool for multiple purposes by law enforcement:

1. **Local Community Engagement.** LEADRS data can be used as an educational tool with its ability to capture and display impaired-driving data.
2. **TABC Enforcement.** LEADRS data (last drink information contained in reporting) can help the TRACE Team investigate alcohol establishments that served an impaired driver. The business can be held liable for overserving a patron.
3. **Training – Courtroom Testimony.** LEADRS tracks driver behaviors at the time of arrest, such as clothing and attitude. Collecting this data increases an officer’s credibility by identifying patterns of behaviors that are consistent with offenses. So, LEADRS can help support an officer’s courtroom testimony about signs of intoxication (e.g., combative, soiled clothing) based on credible data.
4. **Training – Enforcement.** LEADRS collects data on the reasons for stopping an impaired driver. This data set can help officers identify what behaviors they should be looking for to identify impaired drivers.
5. **Supervision of End Users.** Supervisors can use LEADRS data to identify the weak points in agency reporting.

There are several projects that have been recommended for funding by TxDOT that will address establishing an impaired driving database. If approved, the impaired driving database will expand on the foundation provided by the LEADRS model. A new subcommittee will be convened to work on this effort. It will be a collaborative effort between members of the TxIDTF and the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC).



Prevention strategies can be individual or environmental and target a variety of variables.



### Updates from the Traffic Records Coordinating Committee (TRCC)

This statewide group of stakeholders uses the TRCC as a forum for the planning, coordination, and implementation of projects to improve Texas' traffic records system. The TRCC uses federal "State Traffic Safety Information System Improvement Grants (405c)" and other funds to promote projects to improve the accessibility, accuracy, completeness, consistency, timeliness, and uniformity of the traffic records systems in Texas. These projects include efforts to improve individual databases as well as to promote linkages between the core traffic records systems through the development of interfaces to improve direct business needs and integration to improve data analysis.


Read Newsletter [here](#).

Join the TRCC email list [here](#).



Please welcome our new members:

- **Chief Gene Ellis (Ret.)**, *Director, Texas Police Chiefs Association*
- **Kate Johnson**, *Account Manager, Sherry Mathews Group*
- **Joseph Thompson**, *Supervisor – Conviction Reporting, Department of Public Safety, Driver's License Division*



**The next meeting:**

**Thursday, July 25, 2024**

---

**Norris Conference Center**  
2525 W Anderson Ln. #365  
Austin, TX 78757

### Free Workplace Impairment Training is Now Available

Our Driving Concern, a National Safety Council program, has a NEW workplace impairment training available! The new course promotes impairment awareness and understanding for ALL employees in your workplace. This interactive, scenario-based learning includes a six-step process for responding to potential impairment in the workplace.

Participants will learn how the scope of impairment has changed to include a broad definition of the types of impairment:

- Drugs and alcohol
- Fatigue
- Over-the-counter medications
- Stress and mental distress

LIVE instruction, in a classroom or virtual is available! Visit [ourdrivingconcern.org](http://ourdrivingconcern.org) to inquire about this training for YOUR employees.





- [Laredo– ARIDE Course](#)  
July 18–19 | Laredo, TX
- [TxSFST: Bastrop County FREE 8-HR Refresher Course](#)  
July 23 | Bastrop, TX
- TxIDTF: Quarterly Meeting  
July 25 | Austin, TX
- [TxSFST: Humble FREE 8-HR Refresher Course](#)  
July 30 | Humble, TX

**AUGUST**

- [Texas DRE: Lubbock– ARIDE Course](#)  
August 1–2 | Lubbock, TX
- [TxSFST: Bastrop FREE 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)  
August 6 | Bastrop, TX
- [Our Driving Concern: Workplace Impairment Training](#)  
August 6 | Webinar
- [TxSFST: Clute FREE 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)  
August 8 | Clute, TX
- [TxSFST: Tarrant County FREE 8-HR Refresher Course](#)  
August 14 | Fort Worth, TX
- [TxSFST: Fort Bend FREE 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)  
August 15 | Richmond, TX
- [Our Driving Concern: When It Hits the Fan – Best Practices for Managing Incidents](#)  
August 20 | Webinar

**JUNE**

- [Texas DRE: Amarillo – Drug Recognition Expert In-Service Course](#)  
June 3 | Amarillo, TX
- [TxSFST: Tarrant County FREE 8-HR Refresher Course](#)  
June 5 | Fort Worth, TX
- [Our Driving Concern: Covering the Facts — Injury Facts Employers Should be Paying Attention To](#)  
June 11 | Webinar
- [TxSFST: Lampasas FREE 8-HR Refresher Course](#)  
June 13 | Lampasas, TX
- [TxSFST: Lampasas FREE 8-HR Refresher Course](#)  
June 14 | Lampasas, TX
- [TxSFST: Kendall Co FREE 24-HR Practitioner Course](#)  
June 18–20 | Boerne, TX
- [TxSFST: Baytown FREE 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)  
June 21 | Baytown, TX

**JULY**

- [TxSFST: Fort Bend County FREE 8-HR Refresher Course](#)  
July 2 | Richmond, TX
- [Clute FREE 8 – HR SFST Refresher Course – Texas SFST \(txsfst.org\)](#)  
July 9 | Clute, TX
- TRCC: Quarterly Meeting  
July 10 | Virtual
- [TxSFST: Bastrop County FREE 8-HR Refresher Course](#)  
July 11 | Bastrop, TX
- [Texas DRE: Houston – Drug Recognition Expert In-Service Course](#)  
July 15 | Houston, TX
- [Texas DRE: North Richland Hills – Drug Recognition Expert In-Service Course](#)  
July 16 | North Richland Hills, TX
- [TxSFST: Tarrant County FREE 8-HR Refresher Course](#)  
July 17 | Fort Worth, TX
- [Texas DRE: Texas DRE: Specialized DWI Training – “Don’t Fear the Darkside”](#)  
July 17–18 | Houston, TX

