



IMPAIRED DRIVING

Task Force Newsletter



Save a Life™
Texas Department of Transportation

The Evolution of the Drug Evaluation and Classification Program

A Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) is a police officer trained in identifying drivers under the influence of drugs and in identifying the category of drugs causing the impairment. All DREs follow the same 12-step procedure, called a Drug Influence Evaluation (DIE), which is a formal assessment of an impaired driving suspect. Based on the comprehensive DIE of persons suspected of drug-impaired driving or similar offenses, a DRE forms an expert opinion. The DREs testimony is often necessary in court to show impairment because of limitations in toxicology testing. DREs are an extremely valuable tool for combating the harmful effect of drugs on the communities they serve.¹

In the early 1970s, the Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC) Program began in Los Angeles, California when there were a growing number of arrests for driving under the influence (DUI) where drugs were the suspected impairing substance. However, at the time, LAPD officers lacked the ability to substantiate their suspicions of drug-impaired driving. As a result, the LAPD worked with various medical doctors, research psychologists, and other medical professionals to develop a uniform protocol for identifying drug influence and impairment. Their efforts led to the development of a 12-step procedure and the first DEC Program. Currently, all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and the territory of Guam, are participating in the program in the United States.¹

Texas began participating in the DEC program in 1988, and as of 2019 has 410 DREs.² In the early years of the Texas DEC Program, DREs had to advocate on behalf of their training and testimony in order to be accepted by criminal justice professionals. Sgt. Johnnie Harris was in the second Texas DRE class and recalls that in the early days of the program,



judges would not let him testify in court. Similarly, Lt. Ken Authier also attended one of the first DRE schools in Texas and had to be an advocate for the program while the criminal justice system was slow to understand drug-impaired driving. As the DEC Program has grown in Texas, so has the respect for the DRE officers and their testimony. Now, according to Sgt. Harris, judges not only accept DRE training and testimony but question a non-DRE officer about why a DRE officer was not called to a scene when drug-impaired driving was suspected.

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While DRE testimony is now considered valuable to identifying and prosecuting drug-impaired drivers, there are a new set of challenges associated with a shift in societal norms concerning drug use and potential legalization of marijuana. More DREs will be needed statewide, especially metro areas. Completing the DRE training can not only make an officer better prepared to combat drug-impaired driving, but it can also lead officers to many career opportunities. Additionally, DRE training may just help you save a baby's life one day as it did for Lt. Dan Webb...

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Continued: The Evolution of the Drug Evaluation and Classification Program



“One of our [TxDPS] Troopers stopped and arrested a DWI female and asked me [Lt. Webb] to come to the substation for an evaluation. During the evaluation I noticed that the infant still in her car seat was on the nod. I immediately started checking the baby and called for an ambulance. Fortunately, they were across the street and rushed the baby to the hospital. I found a handful of pills stuck in the baby’s diaper. This was about 3 p.m. in the afternoon. Baby survived. Mom went to jail.”

¹ International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). Drug Recognition Experts (DREs). Available at: <https://www.theiacp.org/drug-recognition-experts-dres>. Published 2020. Accessed December 2020.

² International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). 2019 Annual Report: IACP Drug Evaluation & Classification Program. Alexandria, VA: IACP; 2020.

WELCOME!

Please welcome our new member:

Debra Marable
State Program Director
Mothers Against Drunk Driving



Recommendations for Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programs

The updated TxIDTF Recommendations for Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programs, K-12 Grades is complete! The updated version of the reference book includes new evidence-based and TxDOT-funded programs, as well as content updates to existing programs. The purpose of this reference book is to provide Texas K-12th grades with current, impaired driving information for inclusion in health and other curriculum. This reference book provides an overview of alcohol and drug prevention programs that vary in cost, time, and materials so that you can select the program that is best suited for the needs of your students, staff, and schools. Click [here](#) to access the reference book online or visit the TxIDTF website.

Additionally, a condensed version of the reference book is also available, which gives a concise overview of each program. Click [here](#) for access to the condensed version of the reference book or visit the TxIDTF website.



2022 Texas Impaired Driving Safety Award Nominations

Nominations for the 2022 Texas Impaired Driving Safety Awards are open! This is a competitive awarding process meant to honor, celebrate, and encourage those individuals/organizations who go “above and beyond” in support of the mission to eliminate impaired driving in Texas. The award recipients will be recognized at the 2022 Texas Impaired Driving Forum.

Please help us recognize outstanding organizations/individuals by [nominating them](#) today.

Nomination deadline is September 1, 2021.

Questions can be directed to p-ericson@tti.tamu.edu or e-shields@tti.tamu.edu.





RECENTLY PUBLISHED RESOURCES



- [Examination of the Traffic Safety Environment During the Second Quarter of 2020](#), NHTSA
- [Early Estimate of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities for the First Half \(Jan–Jun\) of 2020](#), NHTSA
- [Drug and Alcohol Prevalence in Seriously and Fatally Injured Road Users Before and During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#), NHTSA
- [Practical Theorist 12: Cannabis, The Current State of Affairs](#), CADCA's
- [Alcohol Ignition Interlock Use Rates Following Changes in Interlock Legislation](#), NHTSA

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ABSTRACTS AND STUDIES

- [From phone use to speeding and driving under influence: identifying clusters of driving risk behaviors as an opportunity for targeted interventions](#)
- [Characteristics and Effectiveness of Alcohol Website Age Gates Preventing Underage User Access](#)
- [Alcohol policy, multi-level governance and corporate political strategy: The campaign for Scotland's minimum unit pricing in Edinburgh, London and Brussels](#)
- [The consumption of alcohol by adolescent schoolchildren: Differences in the triadic relationship pattern between rural and urban environments](#)
- [Bilateral transcranial direct current stimulation attenuated symptoms of alcohol use disorder: A systematic review and meta-analysis](#)
- [Transitions in alcohol use over time: a survival analysis](#)
- [Alcohol use disorders](#)
- [Self-reported driving after marijuana use in association with medical and recreational marijuana policies](#)
- [College Students' Perceptions of Peer Alcohol Use: A Social Network Analytic Approach](#)
- [Impact of state-level cannabis legalization on poly use of alcohol and cannabis in the United States, 2004–2017](#)
- [Ordering in alcohol and cannabis co-use: Impact on daily consumption and consequences](#)
- [COVID-19 and alcohol in Mexico: A serious health crisis, strong actions on alcohol in response— Commentary on Stockwell et al.](#)
- [The effects of pre-intervention mindset induction on a brief intervention to increase risk perception and reduce alcohol use among university students: A pilot randomized controlled trial](#)
- [How Adolescents Think When Responding to Alcohol-Related Questionnaires: A Think-Aloud Study](#)
- [Impaired driving among rural female drug-involved offenders](#)
- [College Alcohol Beliefs and Alcohol Outcomes: The Mediating Effects of Alcohol Protective Behavioral Strategies](#)
- [Ride-sharing, Alcohol Consumption, and Drunk Driving](#)
- [Further considerations of the best indicator for the harmful use of alcohol](#)
- [Brief Motivational Intervention for Substance Use may Decrease Violence Among Heavy Alcohol Users in a Jail Diversion Program](#)
- [Direct and indirect effects of marijuana use on the risk of fatal 2-vehicle crash initiation](#)

RECENT NEWS

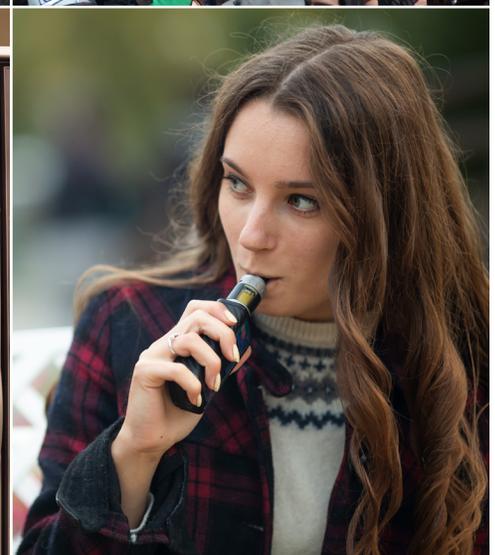
Texas News

- [The Streak: 20 years, 70K deaths and unfulfilled plans for zero road fatalities in Texas](#)
- [Mom Reflects on Loss of Child, Son-in-Law as Texas Sets Road Death Record](#)
- [1 in 5 Texans wrongly believe DUI is not a criminal offense, study reveals](#)
- [Substance-abuse treatment inquires increased 22% in Texas since COVID-19 pandemic](#)
- [Drink. Drive. Lose your job with BCSO: Sheriff says it's that simple.](#)
- [Pandemic Shutdowns Give Insight Into Harris County's High DWI Rates](#)



National News

- [Marijuana legalization measures pass in 5 states](#)
- [Oregon leads the way in decriminalizing hard drugs](#)
- [D.C. voters approve ballot question to decriminalize psychedelic mushrooms](#)
- [Dramatic Increases in Vaping Marijuana and Vaping Nicotine among U.S. College Students and Young Adults](#)
- [Drunk-Driver Detection and Alert System \(DDDAS\) for Smart Vehicles Market Comprehensive Analysis By 2027](#)
- [On Eve of 40th Anniversary, MADD Releases New Report on Alarming Misconceptions about Marijuana Consumption and Driving](#)
- [The impact of banning alcohol during Covid-19](#)





UPCOMING EVENTS

- [ODC: Backing Up: Tips to get 100% of Your Employees On-Board with Prevention](#)
January 20, 2021 | Virtual
- [ODC: Changing Driver Behavior Benefits Everyone](#)
January 26, 2021 | Virtual
- [ARIDE Training](#)
February 1–2, 2021 | Humble, Texas
Registration Deadline: Jan. 18, 2021
- [Texas A&M AgriLife RED Program](#)
February 6, 2021 | Virtual
Email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu by Feb 1 for registration
- [DRE Basic Certification](#)
February 15–25, 2021 | San Antonio, Texas
Registration Deadline: Jan. 18, 2021
- [ODC: Reducing Risky Driving Behaviors through Driver Coaching](#)
February 17, 2021 | Virtual
- [ARIDE Training](#)
February 23–24, 2021 | Carrollton, Texas
Registration Deadline: Feb. 9, 2021
- [DRE Recertification](#)
February 22, 2021 | Carrollton, Texas
Registration Deadline: Feb. 8, 2021
- [TxIDTF: 2021 Texas Impaired Driving Forum](#)
February 24, 2021 | Virtual
- [ODC: Impactful Driver and Transportation Safety Presentation Tips for the Win](#)
February 25, 2021 | Virtual
- [ARIDE Training](#)
March 1–2, 2021 | Denton, Texas
Registration Deadline: Feb. 15, 2021
- [ODC: Safety Breakthrough: Navigating Discussions with Drivers](#)
March 9, 2021 | Virtual



- [Texas A&M AgriLife RED Program](#)
March 27, 2021 | Virtual
Email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu by March 22 for registration
- [TMCEC: 2021 Traffic Safety Conference](#)
March 29–31, 2021 | Denton, TX
TxDOT Program Partners, TxIDTF members, and TxDOT employees are invited to attend. Registration is \$100.
- [ARIDE Training](#)
March 30–31, 2021 | Bay City, Texas
Registration Deadline: March 16, 2021
- [ARIDE Training](#)
March 30–31, 2021 | Burleson, Texas
Registration Deadline: March 17, 2021
- [ARIDE Training](#)
April 6–7, 2021 | Deer Park, Texas
Registration Deadline: March 23, 2021
- [ODC: Safety Breakthrough: Leading Your Team with a Safety Road Map](#)
April 13, 2021 | Virtual
- [DRE Recertification](#)
April 13, 2021 | Round Rock, Texas
Registration Deadline: March 30, 2021
- [ARIDE Training](#)
April 14–15, 2021 | Cedar Park, Texas
Registration Deadline: March 31, 2021
- [ARIDE Training](#)
April 21–22, 2021 | Southlake, Texas
Registration Deadline: April 7, 2021
- [Texas A&M AgriLife RED Program](#)
April 24, 2021 | Virtual
Email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu by April 19 for registration
- [ARIDE Training](#)
April 27–28, 2021 | Uvalde, Texas
Registration Deadline: April 13, 2021
- [Lifesavers Conference](#)
April 26–28, 2021 | Virtual

NEWSLETTER ADDITIONS



If you would like to add anything to the next edition of the newsletter, please send your information to p-ericson@tti.tamu.edu or e-shields@tti.tamu.edu by May 1, 2021.

Submissions are due the 1st of each newsletter month, and will be distributed next on:

- May 15
- September 15