Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) in Wisconsin

Arrests for Operating a Motor Vehicle While Intoxicated

While arrest rates in Wisconsin have decreased over the last three years, these rates have consistently been above the national rates.

Financial Costs of a First Time OWI Offense

- $5,000 or more for attorney fees
- $800 in OWI fines plus fees and costs
- $200-385 mandatory Intoxicated Driver Assessment
- $1,000+ for alcohol or drug treatment, if needed
- $1,000+ per year for an ignition interlock device (if high BAC)

$1650 to $8650 in total for a first time Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) offense!

In Summary

Drivers can be convicted for Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) while under the influence of alcohol, legal prescriptions, medications, over-the-counter medications, or illegal drugs. Despite it being commonplace in Wisconsin, the costs of driving while under the influence are not worth the health, economic, and social risks. If you chose to drink, don't drive.

Fast Facts

- 24% of Wisconsin residents ages 16 and older drove impaired by alcohol within the previous year (NSDUH, 2012).
- In 2012, 30,234 people were arrested for OWI in Wisconsin.
- Wisconsin has 1.3 times the national rate of OWI arrests and 3.3 times the national rate of other liquor law violations.

Persons Killed in Motor Vehicle Crashes by Driver's Blood Alcohol Level

- .00 BAC (62%)
- 01-07 BAC (6%)
- 08+ BAC (33%)

Drivers with positive blood alcohol levels accounted for over a third of fatalities in motor vehicle crashes in Wisconsin in 2012.

Sources:
- 2012 Wisconsin Traffic Crash Facts, Wisconsin Department of Transportation
- Traffic and Accidents in Wisconsin, Wisconsin Department of Justice
- Traffic and Accidents in Wisconsin, Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance
- Crime in the United States, U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Criminal Justice Information Services Division
- Fatality Analysis Reporting System, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation