

Texas Ignition Interlock Training, Outreach, and Evaluation program

In 2020, Texas accounted for 13.5 percent of all alcohol-impaired driving fatalities in the United States.

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Project Need and Approach

Each day, over 100 lives are lost in impaired driving crashes across the United States, with Texas accounting for 13.5 percent of these tragedies. In 2021, Texas reported 936 fatal impaired driving crashes, resulting in 1,077 deaths. Ignition interlock devices (IIDs) are proven countermeasures to reduce driving while intoxicated (DWI) recidivism because they prevent a vehicle from starting if the driver's breath alcohol exceeds the legal limit. Many states, including Texas, mandate IID installation for DWI offenders as a condition of bond and/or probation.

However, according to a National Injury Prevention Council report, Texas magistrates ordered IID installation in only 61 percent of repeat offender cases (second offenses and felonies) and 38 percent of mandatory bond condition cases, despite legal requirements. Texas laws allow courts to waive IID use if deemed "not in the best interest of justice," but a lack of awareness about IID mandates among judges, prosecutors, and probation officers often contributes to noncompliance. This gap highlights the need for continued education within the criminal justice system to ensure IIDs are ordered in as many applicable cases as possible.

The Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) continued to build on its highly successful IID training program, targeting professionals in the criminal justice and traffic safety fields. The program provides training and outreach to increase awareness of IID laws and their implementation. Trainers assist practitioners in understanding when, how, and for whom IIDs should be deployed. TTI's curriculum is specifically designed to enhance knowledge among prosecutors, judges, and probation officers, promoting more consistent use of IIDs across Texas.

The project provided training and educational materials to criminal justice and traffic safety professionals to increase the use of ignition interlocks in Texas.



Proper installation of IIDs ensures they function effectively to keep roads safe.



Ignition interlock devices save lives by preventing impaired driving before it starts.

Project Activities

This project focused on training and educating criminal justice professionals to enhance the use of IIDs in Texas. Key activities included 19 IID training sessions across the state for prosecutors, judges and probation officers, reaching over 330 participants from 24 counties. The program also developed and updated curriculum packages to reflect recent legal changes and produced a technical memorandum summarizing these updates.

Outreach efforts included three public coalition meetings and participation in two impaired driving and IID conferences. These activities aimed to educate both criminal justice professionals and the public on the benefits of IIDs. Feedback collected from training sessions will guide future curriculum improvements.

The project's ultimate goal was to improve the criminal justice system's response to impaired driving by ensuring IIDs are properly ordered, monitored, and enforced. By doing so, the program seeks to reduce recidivism and alcohol-related crashes statewide.

Benefits to Texas Transportation Safety

The ignition interlock project focused on training criminal justice stakeholders on this effective countermeasure against alcohol-impaired driving. Trainings were conducted county-by-county, allowing trainers to address unique local challenges, improve communication among stakeholders and tailor the curriculum based on findings from recidivism studies. Industry trainers also participated, fostering collaboration with ignition interlock providers and enabling stakeholders to address questions in real time. These trainings—often the first exposure participants have to this critical tool—equip them with the knowledge to effectively implement ignition interlocks and reduce impaired driving.

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