



IMPAIRED DRIVING

Task Force Newsletter



Drug Impaired Driving – The Toxicology Perspective



Adapted from Dr. Peter Stout’s Presentation at the Texas Impaired Driving Forum. Full presentation may be viewed [here](#).

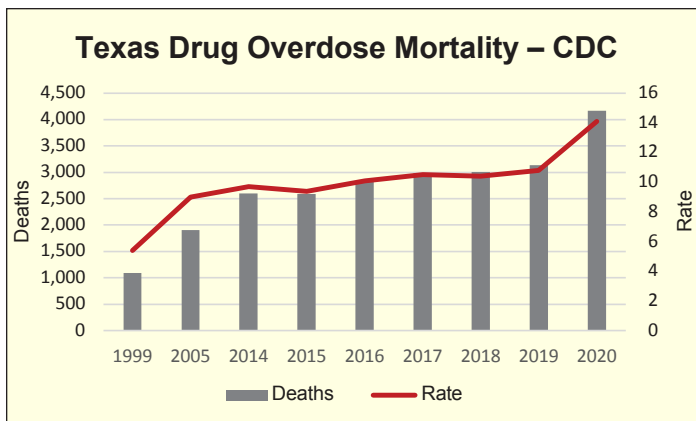
There is a drug overdose crisis happening right now, with more than 96,000 people dying each year. This epidemic is happening across the country, and it spans across all age groups. Texas is experiencing a significant issue based upon the CDC’s report on [Drug Overdose Mortality by State](#).¹ While there is a great deal of focus on opioids, psychostimulants like methamphetamine, is trailing right behind.

The changing drug impaired driving landscape is exemplified in Houston, Texas. Houston toxicology labs which evaluate drug induced poisons, have revealed that alcohol, cannabis,

and then Phencyclidine (PCP) are the most common drugs found in Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) cases. According to the Houston Forensic Science Center, mean Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) is 0.16, which is two times the states illegal per se limit. In alcohol-impaired driving cases, the average offender age is 36 years old, and their cases are overrepresented by males (80%) who are mostly Caucasian (65%).

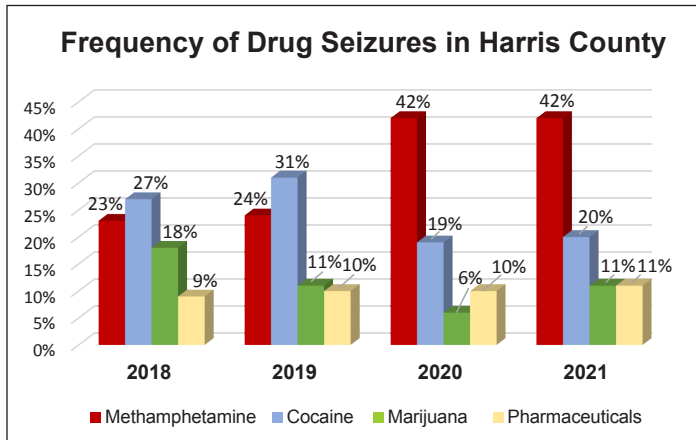
The PCP demographics shows a slightly different offender. PCP offenders are usually older in age, are overwhelmingly male, and mostly African American. When PCP is identified in a DWI offender, 43% are positive for PCP only. More than half (57%) of offenders driving under the influence of PCP have additional substances in their system. The most common drug found with PCP use is marijuana. However, the types of drugs used in combination runs the gamut. Overall, alcohol intoxicated drivers tend to be older whereas drugged intoxicated drivers tend to be younger and typically using multiple drugs at the time of offense.

In 2020, considerable alarm arose when methamphetamine became the top drug seized. Methamphetamine represents 42% of all drug related seizures. Dr. Stout noted that marijuana does not show up as number one because Harris County is not



Drug Impaired Driving – The Toxicology Perspective Continued from Page 1

processing most marijuana cases as criminal offenses. Data from the Houston labs showing drug seizure categories, by percentage, are illustrated in the chart below.



Houston toxicology labs which evaluate drug induced poisons, have revealed that alcohol, cannabis, and then Phencyclidine (PCP) are the most common drugs found in Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) cases.

Drug trends can also be identified by the quantity of “bulk drugs” seized as part of an arrest. The bags of drugs seized and delivered to the crime lab contain all kinds of different drugs. For example, bags labeled Ecstasy, or MDMA, often contain methamphetamine. Dr. Stout indicated that it is rare to find true MDMA in Harris County as it is almost always found to be methamphetamine. In one sample MDMA bag, the pills contained a mixture of: MDMA, methamphetamine, fentanyl, and tramadol. Some sample pills had methamphetamine

and fentanyl in the same tablet. Seized Adderall has also been found to test positive as methamphetamine. This is particularly dangerous for college students who use Adderall as a stimulant enhancing drug which is viewed by some as comparable to caffeine. Another trend is OxyContin pills testing positive fentanyl. An important point to note in today’s current drug culture is: “what you see is not always what you get.”

Synthetic opioids, such as Carfentanil, are also showing up more frequently in crime labs. “Carfentanil is a synthetic opioid approximately 10,000 times more potent than morphine and 100 times more potent than fentanyl.”² The first case of Carfentanil detected in Texas was recognized as a Fentanyl overdose case. The officer assumed the small baggy of power contained methamphetamine but when the substance was analyzed by the laboratory, it was discovered to be Carfentanil. The baggy contained 80mg which is approximately 4,000 lethal doses.

Toxicologists have identified Carfentanil in Harris County about a dozen times now. Fentanyl continues to be an ongoing concern in Texas as the drug comes easily into the US at an alarming rate. While in the past, most Fentanyl was being trafficked into the US from China, today, much of the product is being processed and coming into the US from Mexico.

[Illicit pill pressing operations](#) invest approximately \$2,000 in a brick of Fentanyl then combine it with magnesium stearate then use machines to press the mixture into pills. This process can churn out between 50,000–100,000 tablets that can be sold for \$2–20 on the street, for a potential profit of millions. [These pills are indistinguishable from popular drugs like Xanax.](#)



Pill press. Photo credit: [New York Post](#).

It is important to keep an open mind when analyzing drug use in a traffic stop or in a medical emergency. One of the most important things to consider when dealing with a person who has consumed drugs, is do not assume that they know what they have taken. There are a variety of compounds that show up in lieu of, or in addition to, what the person believes they have consumed. The cautionary tale is that someone may report having taken a different drug than they think they did. One should always consider that it may not always be clear what you’re dealing with.

Dr. Peter Stout is the CEO and president of the Houston Forensic Science Center (HFSC). He has more than 15 years of experience in forensic science and forensic toxicology. Prior to joining HFSC, Dr. Stout worked as a senior research forensic scientist and director of operations in the Center for Forensic Sciences at RTI International. Dr. Stout also has served as president of the Society of Forensic Toxicologists (SOFT). He represented SOFT in the Consortium of Forensic Science Organizations and has participated in national policy debates on the future of forensic sciences in the United States. Dr. Stout has a doctorate in toxicology from the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in Denver. Dr. Stout also served as an officer in the U.S. Navy Medical Service Corps.

¹ Center for Disease Control (2022). *Drug Overdose Mortality by State, United States, 1995-2020* [Data Set]. CDC/National Center for Health Statistics. https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/drug_poisoning_mortality/drug_poisoning.htm

² Drug Enforcement Agency (2016, September 22). *DEA Issues Carfentanil Warning To Police and Public*. US Department of Justice. <https://www.dea.gov/press-releases/2016/09/22/dea-issues-carfentanil-warning-police-and-public#:~:text=WASHINGTON%20%2D%20DEA%20has%20issued%20a,times%20more%20potent%20than%20heroin>

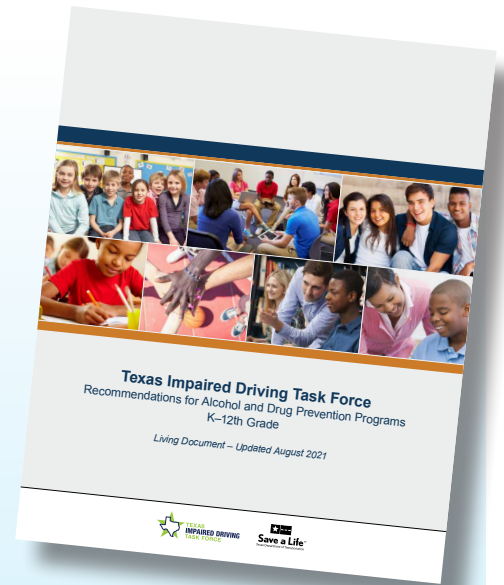
Recommendations for Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programs

Learn about school-based alcohol and drug prevention programs!

The updated 2021 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. Additionally, a condensed version of the reference book is also available, which gives a concise overview of each program.

Access these great resources on the Texas Impaired Driving Task Force website here: www.texasimpaireddrivingtaskforce.org/referencebook



**Please Welcome
Our New Members:**

LaViza Matthews
Director, Andrea's Project

Agent Erica Moore
TRACE Unit, Texas Alcoholic
Beverage Commission

Next Texas Impaired Driving Task Force Meeting

DATE: June 16, 2022 ★ TIME: 10 AM – 3 PM

PLACE: Norris Conference Center in Austin, Texas

We look forward to meeting with the task force in-person!

2022



Texas Statewide IMPAIRED DRIVING FORUM

The 2022 Texas Impaired Driving Forum was held on February 23, 2022. All sessions were recorded and can be viewed on the TxIDTF website here: <https://www.texasimpaireddrivingtaskforce.org/forum/2022-impaired-driving-forum/>

Thank you to everyone who made this event a success!

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 or e-shields@tti.tamu.edu by September 1, 2022. Submissions are due the 1st of each newsletter month, and will be distributed next on September 15, 2022.

Texas Impaired Driving Assessment

The Texas Impaired Driving Assessment, conducted through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s (NHTSA) Technical Assessment Program, will be held this year through a hybrid model.

The Impaired Driving Assessment is intended to enhance the effectiveness of Texas’s alcohol-impaired driving program in preventing injuries, saving lives, and reducing economic costs of motor vehicle crashes on Texas roadways.

The in-person portion will be held in Austin at the Embassy Suites in the Arboretum August 15th–19th. The NHTSA assessment team will determine who will testify based on the information that is uploaded into the online portal.

RECENT NEWS

Texas

- [Texas Austin police warn against buying illegal drugs after deadly overdoses before SXSW](#)
- [Harris county police officer killed in drunk driving crash](#)
- [Texas has been listed as the state with the worst drivers in 2022](#)
- [TxDOT urges students not to drive under the influence through spring break campaign](#)



National

- [Many marijuana vendors aim advertising at kids](#)
- [Using marijuana may affect your ability to think and plan, study says](#)
- [DEA: 4 in 10 counterfeit pills contain fatal dose of fentanyl](#)
- [‘Vision Zero’ at a crossroads as US traffic deaths rise](#)



RECENTLY PUBLISHED RESOURCES, ABSTRACTS AND STUDIES



Recently Published Resources

- [GHSA Publication – Directions in Highway Safety: Spring 2022 Issue](#)
- [TIRF USA Road Safety Monitor 2021 – Alcohol-Impaired Driving & COVID-19 in the United States](#)
- [TIRF – Ignition Interlock Installations: 2019 State Data](#)

Recently Published Abstracts and Studies

- [Simultaneous Alcohol/Cannabis Use and Driving Under the Influence in the U.S.](#)
- [A Content Analysis of Cannabis Company Adherence to Marketing Requirements in Four States](#)



UPCOMING EVENTS



May

- [Texas DRE: League City Drug Recognition Expert Recertification](#)
May 17 | League City, TX
- [ODC: High in Plain Sight: Current Drug, Impairment, and Impaired Driving Trends](#)
May 18 | Virtual
- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
May 19 | Virtual
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register
- [TxSFST: Limestone Co 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
May 20 | Limestone County Sheriff's Office Training Center
- [DITEP: San Antonio 2-DAY DITEP](#)
May 24–25 | Education Service Center 20
- [DWI Course: Victoria Co 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)
May 24 | Prosperity Bank
(2nd Floor – Town Hall Room)
- [TxSFST: Waller Co 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
May 25 | Waller County Sheriff's Office
- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
May 25 | Virtual
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register
- [ODC: Why Speed Matters](#)
May 25 | Virtual
- [DITEP: Edinburg 2-DAY DITEP](#)
May 26–27 | Education Service Center 1
- [DWI Course: Waller Co 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)
May 26 | Waller County Sheriff's Office
- [DITEP: Fort Worth 2-DAY DITEP](#)
May 31–June 1 | Brewer High School

June

- [TxSFST: Houston 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
June 1 | Southside Police Department Club House
- [TxSFST: Houston 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
June 2 | Southside Police Department Club House
- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
June 2 | Virtual
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register
- [Texas DRE: Grand Prairie Drug Recognition Expert Basic Certification](#)
June 6 | Grand Prairie, TX
- [DITEP: Laredo 2-DAY DITEP](#) June 8–9 | Nixon High School Library
- [DWI Course: Bandera Co 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)
June 8 | Bandera County Sheriff's Office
- [TxSFST: Tarrant Co 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
June 9 | Tarrant County College Northwest Campus
- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
June 11 | 1470 William D. Fitch Parkway,
College Station, Texas
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register
- [DWI Course: Bryan 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)
June 13 | Bryan Police Department
- [ARIDE: Belton 2-DAY ARIDE](#)
June 14–15 | Belton DPS Office
- [ODC: Turning Technology into Results](#)
June 14 | Virtual
- [DITEP: El Paso 2-DAY DITEP](#)
June 15–16 | Ysleta Independent School District



UPCOMING EVENTS

- [TxSFST: New Braunfels 24-HR SFST Practitioner Course](#)
June 15-17 | New Braunfels Police Department
- [DWI Course: Deer Park 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)
June 16 | Deer Park Police Department
- [Texas Impaired Driving Task Force Meeting](#)
June 16 | Norris Conference Center, Austin, Tx
- [TxSFST: Waxahachie 24-HR SFST Practitioner Course](#)
June 21-23 | Waxahachie Police Department

June

- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
June 22 | Virtual
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register
- [TxSFST: Hockley Co 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
June 27 | Hockley County Sheriff's Office
- [DWI Course: Hockley Co 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)
June 28 | Hockley County Sheriff's Office
- [ARIDE: Colin Co 2-DAY ARIDE](#)
June 29-30 | Collin County Sheriff's Office
- [TxSFST: Denver City 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
June 29 | Denver City Community Center
- [Texas DRE: Grand Prairie Drug Recognition Expert Recertification](#)
June 29 | Grand Prairie, TX
- [DWI Course: Denver City 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)
June 30 | Denver City Community Center
- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
June 30 | Virtual
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register

July

- [TxSFST: Smith Co 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
July 1 | Smith County Peace Officer's Building
- [TxSFST: Cactus 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
July 1 | Cactus Fire Department
- [TxSFST: Uvalde 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
July 5 | Uvalde Civic Center
- [DWI Course: Uvalde 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)
July 6 | Uvalde Civic Center
- [TxSFST: Uvalde 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
July 7 | Uvalde Civic Center
- [DITEP: El Paso 2-DAY DITEP](#)
July 11-12 | Ysleta Independent School District
- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
July 12 | Virtual
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register
- [Tall Cop: Doping, Clothing, & Stashes](#)
July 12 | Irving, Texas
- [Tall Cop: High in Plain Sight](#)
July 12 | Irving, Texas
- [DITEP: El Paso 2-DAY DITEP](#)
July 13-14 | Ysleta Independent School District
- [TxSFST: Tarrant Co 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
July 14 | Tarrant County College Northwest Campus
- [DITEP: Keller 2-DAY DITEP](#)
July 18-19 | Keller ISD Administration Building
- [Texas DRE: Harris County Drug Recognition Expert Basic Certification](#)
July 18 | Harris County Sheriff's Academy
- [DITEP: Keller 1-DAY DITEP](#)
July 20 | Keller ISD Administration Building
- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
July 20 | Virtual
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register
- [TxSFST: Krugerville 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
July 21 | Krugerville Police Department
- [DITEP: Kingsville 1-DAY DITEP](#)
July 28 | H.M King High School



**UPCOMING
EVENTS**



- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
July 30 | 1470 William D. Fitch Parkway,
College Station, Texas
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or
pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register

- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
August 13 | 1470 William D. Fitch Parkway,
College Station, Texas
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or
pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register

August

- [DITEP: Beaumont 2-DAY DITEP](#)
August 1–2 | Edison Plaza
- [DITEP: Waco 2-DAY DITEP](#)
August 3–4 | Education Service Center –
Baylor BRIC Labs
- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
August 3 | Virtual
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or
pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register
- [DITEP: Cleveland 2-DAY DITEP](#)
August 4–5 | Cleveland ISD Service Center
- [DITEP: Conroe 1-DAY DITEP](#)
August 5 | Conroe ISD
- [DITEP: Richardson 2-DAY DITEP](#)
August 8–9 | Abrams Building
- [ODC: When it Hits the Fan – Best Practices for
Managing Incidents](#)
August 9 | Virtual
- [Texas DRE: Harris County Drug Recognition Expert
Recertification](#)
August 10 | Harris County Sheriff’s Academy
- [DITEP: Eagle Pass 2-DAY DITEP](#)
August 11–12 | Eagle Pass High School
- [DITEP: Clute 1-DAY DITEP](#)
August 11 | Clute Fire & EMS Station
- [TxSFST: Tarrant Co 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
August 11 | Tarrant County College Northwest Campus

- [DITEP: Kingsville 2-DAY DITEP](#)
August 17–18 | H.M. King High School
- [BVIPC: Red Class](#)
August 18 | Virtual
Please email maryjo.prince@ag.tamu.edu or
pamela.todaro@ag.tamu.edu to register
- [TxSFST: Waller Co 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
August 24 | Waller County Sheriff’s Office
- [ODC: Railroad Safety: Eliminating Unsafe Behaviors
Near Railroad Crossings and Tracks](#)
August 24 | Virtual
- [DWI Course: Waller Co 8-HR Advanced DWI Course](#)
August 25 | Waller County Sheriff’s Office
- [ARIDE: Kilgore 2-DAY ARIDE](#)
August 25–26 | East Texas Police Academy

September

- [DITEP: Bastrop 1-DAY DITEP](#)
September 2 | Bastrop ISD Service Center
- [TxSFST: Tarrant Co 8-HR SFST Refresher Course](#)
September 8 | Tarrant County College Northwest
Campus
- [Texas DRE: Harris County Drug Recognition Expert
Recertification](#)
September 12 | Harris County Sheriff’s Academy
- [Texas DRE: Williamson Co Drug Recognition Expert
Recertification](#)
September 14 | Williamson County Sheriff’s Office