



## TRAFFIC NEWS JANUARY 2012

# DRUG Use Among At-Fault Drivers Involved in Fatal Collisions

Frequently when people think of driving impaired they visualize someone driving after drinking too much alcohol. Driving impaired is much more than driving after consuming alcohol. It also includes using an illegal or prescription drug before driving that affects your ability to operate a vehicle. Driving and the use of drugs both, illegal and legal (over therapeutic levels and drugs that affect your ability to operate machinery), have showed a steady increase over the past few years nationwide. A study conducted by The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, NHTSA, "found that in 2009, among fatally injured drivers, 18 percent tested positive for at least one drug (e.g. illicit, prescription, or over-the-counter), an increase from 13 percent in 2005."

Although Davidson County is not following this trend in our fatal collisions, we are still seeing a large percentage of at-fault individuals under the influence of drugs and alcohol. During 2010 in Davidson County, **49%** of at-fault drivers involved in fatal collisions were under the influence of either drugs or alcohol at the time of the crash. Of those who were impaired while driving, **36% were under the influence of alcohol only, 29% were under the influence of drugs only and 36% were under the influence of both alcohol and drugs.** During the first 11 months of 2011 in Davidson County, **45%** of at-fault drivers involved in fatal collisions were under the influence of either drugs or alcohol at the time of the crash. (These numbers do not reflect the December 2011 crashes because the data is not yet available.) **18% percent of those impaired were under the influence of alcohol only, 18% were under the influence of drugs only and 9% were under the influence of drugs and alcohol.** What the numbers do reflect is how the trend of driving while under the influence of drugs is catching up with the trend of driving under the influence of alcohol.

Make sure you read all labels on medications so you know which ones might affect your driving ability. Do not consume alcohol, illegal drugs, or prescriptions that impair your ability before getting behind the wheel of a vehicle. It might be the one bad decision that lands you in jail or worse kills someone.



METROPOLITAN NASHVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

TRAFFIC SECTION NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2012

# Teenage Driver Awareness Course

February 17th & March 18th the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department will be hosting free forums for teenagers regarding teenage driver awareness. The teenage driver awareness program will focus on impaired driving, distracted driving, and general traffic safety. The sessions will be four hours long and will be held at 1417 Murfreesboro Pike.

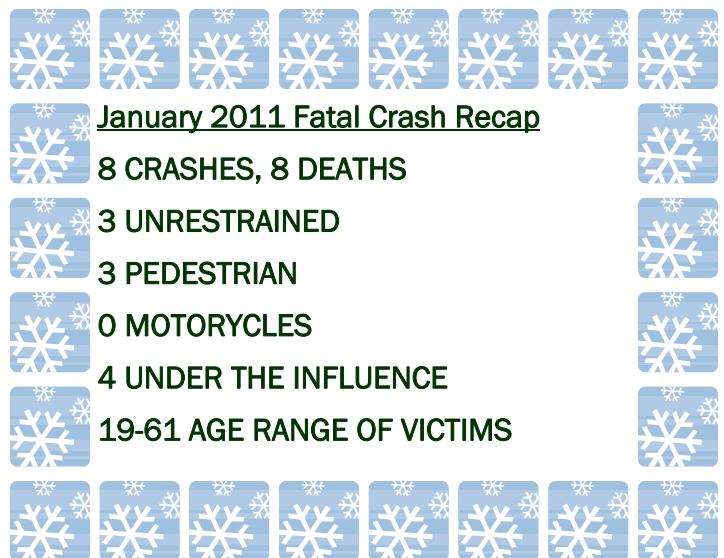
If you are interested in your teen attending one of these sessions or have any questions please contact the traffic section of the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department at: 615-862-7738 or [erika.bowden@nashville.gov](mailto:erika.bowden@nashville.gov) no later than one week prior to the session you want your teen to attend. We look forward to hearing from you.



# Increase in Fatal Collisions for 2011

During 2011 there were 75 fatal collisions resulting in 75 deaths. This is a 7% increase in collisions and 1% increase in deaths resulting from these collisions from 2010. The main contributing factor in these crashes was "Failure to Maintain Lane". Of the 35% of at-fault drivers that failed to maintain their lane, 61% of them were driving under the influence of either drugs, alcohol, or both. That could only lead a reasonable person to believe that the other 39% had some sort of distraction in their vehicle that caused them to leave their lane of travel. There are a wide range of distractions that occur within vehicles that are 100% preventable. For example; texting, putting makeup on, eating, changing the radio station, using a cellphone, and using a navigation system.

There is no distraction worth risking yours or someone else's life. Please think about this the next time you start to do something that will distract you from driving. Keep your attention on driving and have a safe year.





**HELP WANTED**  
**School Crossing Guard**  
 Call 615-862-7752  
 or apply online at  
**Nashville.gov**

**METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT**

1417 Murfreesboro Pike  
 Nashville, TN 37129

Phone: (615) 862-7738  
 Fax: (615) 880-2894  
 E-mail: Erika.Bowden@nashville.gov



Special Operations Division, Traffic Section

The Special Operations Division, Traffic Section of the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department strives to make our streets the safest streets in the country for traveling and local motorists. One way we are able to improve the safety of our roadways is through education and information sharing. If you have a topic you need information on, chances are someone else does too. Feel free to e-mail me at Erika.Bowden@nashville.gov with your traffic related questions. I will answer your questions and may also include a section covering that topic in future newsletters. You can now also find us on facebook under Metro-Nashville Police Department Traffic Section.



Join Us on Facebook: Metro-Nashville Police Department Traffic Section  
[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)



**CRIME STOPPERS**

Crime Stoppers - 862-7463 - Crime Stoppers can refer you to a specialized crime unit if needed (i.e. - Gang Unit, Vice, Gambling and Prostitution, etc.)

Traffic/ Hit & Run - 862-7713 & 862-7738

You can also provide tips and witness information at our website :  
<http://www.police.nashville.org/>

Call 74-CRIME OR

Text the word CASH and your message to Crimes (274637)

ALL THREE WAYS ARE ANONYMOUS AND SECURE.