



State of Illinois
Illinois Department of Transportation



Roadside **WHY?** Safety **CHECKPOINTS**

WHY DO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES USE ROADSIDE SAFETY CHECKPOINTS (RSCs)?

RSCs are a proven way to catch impaired drivers and get them off the roads. Also, RSCs reduce impaired driving because people fear they will be caught when law enforcement agencies are out in force.

HOW DO ROADSIDE SAFETY CHECKPOINTS DETER IMPAIRED DRIVERS?

Drivers tend to change their driving habits when they know a RSC is being held in their area. The perceived threat of getting caught driving impaired increases so they use a designated driver and other safe alternatives like public transportation rather than getting behind the wheel after drinking.

HOW SIGNIFICANT A PROBLEM IS IMPAIRED DRIVING?

Nationally, in the last few years, 32% of motor vehicle crash fatalities involved an alcohol-impaired driver. In Illinois, that percentage is at 35%. Nearly one million people are injured and one million cars crash because of impaired driving. Impaired driving is a major social problem in America, but it is completely preventable.

DOES ILLINOIS USE ROADSIDE SAFETY CHECKPOINTS EXTENSIVELY?

Yes. Every other week the Chicago Police Department conducts checks. Similarly, the Cook County Sheriff's office conducts them frequently at various times throughout the year, as do the Illinois State Police and numerous other local law enforcement agencies. The State Police often conduct the checkpoints in conjunction with city and county agencies all over Illinois. Many suburban municipal law enforcement agencies also frequently use RSCs as part of their overall traffic safety enforcement programs.

AREN'T ROADSIDE SAFETY CHECKPOINTS INCONVENIENT FOR MOTORISTS?

Well planned RSCs only delay motorists about as long as a stop at a traffic signal. Should traffic back up, law enforcement officers stop the check and continue when congestion is cleared. In a national survey, 79% of the public supported RSCs to reduce impaired driving.

HOW CAN THE EXPENSE OF ROADSIDE SAFETY CHECKPOINTS BE JUSTIFIED IN LIMITED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY BUDGETS?

Impaired driving prevention is an important and effective role for law enforcement in reducing injuries and saving lives. Criminal arrests are sometimes made during these checks. Local, county and state law enforcement agencies are often able to share the costs for equipment and personnel.

HOW DOES IMPAIRED DRIVING AFFECT OUR SOCIETY?

Nationally, economic costs of alcohol-related crashes are estimated to be \$45 billion annually. In Illinois alone, it is over \$1 billion each year.

ARE ROADSIDE SAFETY CHECKPOINTS LEGAL?

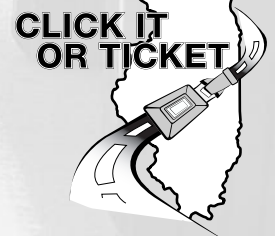
Properly conducted RSCs are completely legal. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld their constitutionality in 1990. Thirty-nine states plus the District of Columbia conduct RSCs

ARE ROADSIDE SAFETY CHECKPOINTS REALLY NECESSARY FOR ADEQUATE DUI ENFORCEMENT PROGRAMS?

Research substantiates the fact that RSCs and aggressive public information efforts are essential to achieve deterrence of impaired driving. They also provide a means of increasing public awareness for safety belt use. Agencies are able to use RSCs to favorably recognize sober drivers and passengers using safety belts and to encourage non-users to buckle up before proceeding.

WHY ARE ROADSIDE SAFETY CHECKPOINTS NEEDED MORE THAN ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR?

RSCs must be conducted frequently to maximize effectiveness and produce the desired results. Once media coverage declines, frequency is even more important in order to maintain effectiveness.



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