# CONNECTICUT
# DUI Screening

▶At-a-Glance

▶**Project Characteristics**
Screening
Data Collection

▶**Program Areas**
Alcohol and Other Drugs

▶**Targeted Populations**
Motoring Public

▶**Type of Jurisdiction**
State

▶**Jurisdiction Size**
Statewide

▶**Funding**
164 Funds FY 03: $90,844
164 Funds FY 02: $253,458

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## Problem Identification

The Department of Public Safety's concern about the hazards created by motorists combining alcohol and other drugs is growing. This concern includes not only drugs of abuse such as ecstasy, cocaine, heroin, PCP, and marijuana, but also prescription medications and medications sold over the counter.

The Internet has increased access to illegal prescription drugs. Of particular concern is the use of pain relievers (Tylenol/codeine, Percodan, and Ultram), sleeping pills (Ambien, Sonata, barbiturates), or anti-anxiety medication (Valium, Ativan, Xanax, Librium, Elavil). Even common medications sold over the counter for colds, allergies or anxiety may affect a driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle in ways so subtle that the operator may not realize that he or she is affected. The effects of these types of drugs could be exacerbated when they are taken with alcohol.

In 2000, approximately 6,000 blood and urine samples were analyzed for alcohol as a part of routine DUI (Driving Under the Influence) screening. However, only 50 percent of the samples were also analyzed for the presence of drugs. A complete drug analysis of all blood and urine specimens submitted for DUI investigation is necessary to implement a comprehensive prevention program. In order to obtain a clear, complete profile of those arrested for DUI, the presence of common prescription medications, over-the-counter medications, and drugs of abuse/controlled substances must be identified.

## Goals and Objectives

The *DUI Screening* project's goal is to implement blood and urine analysis in DUI screening to create a profile of those driving under the influence of drugs and alcohol. The project's objectives are to:

- Identify drivers arrested for DUI who are also under the influence of drugs and properly identify the drug(s) used;

- Conduct a demographic analysis of the resulting data and make it available to traffic safety, enforcement, and state prosecutors; and

- Coordinate project data with the Connecticut Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) to provide a comprehensive representation of the incidence of driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs in fatal crashes.

# Strategies and Activities

The *DUI Screening* project created the following multi-step process for analyzing DUI samples for the presence of drugs:

1. Assign a laboratory case number to each DUI sample the lab's Evidence Control Officer receives.

2. Analyze the sample(s) for the presence of alcohol (Ethanol, Methanol or Acetone) using Gas Chromatography (GC) via Head Space (HS) analysis.

3. Create a duplicate test sample to comply with state alcohol testing statutes.

4. Submit duplicate sample to the Enzyme Multiplied Immunoassay Technique (EMIT) to screen for controlled substances.

5. Verify results. Connecticut statutes require confirmation of a positive test, therefore, positive EMIT samples (positive results) are sent to the Gas Chromatography/Mass Spectroscopy (GC/MS) for confirmation. GC/MS, a highly specific screening method, allows each individual compound in a sample to be identified, including controlled, non-controlled, legal and illegal substances.

6. Prepare and review report after testing is complete. The laboratory retains the original report including all test results, and sends a copy to the submitting law enforcement agency and the tested subject.

7. Enter data from the report into the laboratory DUI Screening database.

# Results

As of January 2004, the *DUI Screening* project is close to fully operational. Approximately 1600 test results have been added into the DUI Screening database. The data added into the database will include demographics such as town or county of origin, year of birth of subject, date of incident, and screening summary. An outside consultant is currently writing queries to make the database even more usable. The data collected through this screening process will be made available to highway safety officials, state prosecutors, and DUI enforcement personnel. The data will be reviewed as highway safety plans are developed and will be used to assist in concentrated project planning efforts. By analyzing all blood, urine, and breath samples for the presence of alcohol or other drugs, the *DUI Screening* project is helping to provide a more comprehensive picture of the DUI issue and its offenders.