

FBI data shows more women are being arrested for DUI

Written by Australian Business

October 08, 2013 /**24-7PressRelease**/ -- Drunk driving charges against women have risen sharply in recent decades, FBI data shows, even as the number of male drivers arrested for DUI has been in decline.

In the early 1980s, female drivers accounted for only about 10 percent of all DUI arrests nationwide. By 2011, however, women made up nearly 25 percent of all [drunk driving arrests](#), according to the Federal Bureau of Intelligence. Meanwhile, the number of male drivers arrested for DUI has been in decline since 1995.

While the reasons for this trend are not entirely known, experts theorize that several different factors could be contributing to the increasing rate at which women are being charged with driving under the influence.

More female drivers

Some observers contend that more females are being [charged with DUI](#) as a result of several societal changes that have occurred in recent decades. One likely factor, some say, is the simple fact that women today are driving more than in earlier generations.

With a higher number of women working outside of the home, there are more women on the roads than in decades past, and therefore the potential for DUI charges is increased. In addition, while it was once typical for men to drive when couples went out together, it is now commonplace for women to do the driving.

Stress and societal changes

Another possible contributor to the growing DUI rate among women, some believe, is the stress that many of today's women face when struggling to balance the demands of numerous -- and sometimes competing -- roles. For many women, this may include managing a wide range of competing obligations, such as mother, working professional, homemaker, community member and, in many cases, caretaker for aging parents.

Particularly in a slow economy, the task of juggling these numerous demands can be intensely stressful, which for some women may increase the likelihood of a DUI arrest. A study conducted by the Traffic Injury Research Foundation found a close correlation between stress and DUI arrests among female drivers.

Of the 186 female DUI defendants who participated in the TIRF study, nearly all said they had been arrested shortly after a stressful life event such as divorce or the death of a family member. More than 75 percent also said they used one or more prescription medications for anxiety, depression or other disorders.

Stricter DUI laws

Today's DUI laws create a lower threshold for drivers to be considered legally intoxicated, which could also account for some of the increase in the female drunk driving rate in recent years.

In the past, the blood alcohol content (BAC) threshold for DUI was set much higher than it is today, at 0.10 or even 0.15. Today, however, it is illegal in all states to drive with a BAC of 0.08 or higher. Although women generally tend to drink less heavily than men, they also typically require fewer drinks to reach the legal DUI limit. As a result of the stricter DUI laws that have been passed in recent decades, more women may face charges for exceeding the legal limit by a relatively small amount.

Call a DUI defense lawyer if arrested

If you or a loved one is arrested for driving under the influence, it is important to get help from a skilled DUI defense lawyer at the earliest opportunity. An attorney with experience in DUI defense can help protect your legal rights during all stages of the investigation and prosecution, and will work hard to obtain a favorable resolution to your case.

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