NTSB Pushes For Stricter DUI Limits
News
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KANSAS CITY, Mo. â□□The amount of drinks someone can have before being considered legally drunk may be changing.

The National Transportation Safety Board is pushing for lower blood-alcohol limits for American drivers, changing the standard set about a decade ago

If adopted, the proposal would push the limit lower to .05. It's currently .08 in all 50 states.

Right now, a 130-pound woman could consume about three beers or glasses of wine in 90 minutes. Under a stricter limit, the same woman could only have two drinks in that same time frame. A man's consumption would drop from four drinks to three in 90 minutes.

"Here is the key point. What people don't recognize is that there are drinks and there are drinks," said Dr. Richard Gilroy of the University of Missouri-Kansas City. "You have a mixed drink when you are calculating the pour or one glass of wine. I think you can appreciate in the average restaurant these days the glasses hold a lot more."

Supporters of the proposed change said there are will about 10,000 alcohol-related traffic fatalities every year, and other countries have stricter DUI laws than the United States. Gilroy's home country of Australia, for example, has a .05 level and has a much lower rate of alcohol-related fatal wrecks.

"At least the state and national fatalities (in Australia) are under 1,000 for the country," he said. "If we look at the states of Kansas and Missouri, which is about a third of that, you would have twice as many fatalities on the road."

Any changes to the laws would have to be done on the state level.

Sarah Longwell of the American Beverage Institute said she doesn't think the change would make much of a difference.

"This recommendation targets moderate social drinkers. It doesn't target the hard core population that causes the vast majority of alcohol-related fatalities," she said.