



Rhode Island Car Accident Attorney Says More Needs To Be Done To Stop Drunk Driving

With a recent CDC survey showing that 112 million drinking-and-driving incidents occurred nationwide in 2010, more aggressive steps need to be taken to curb impaired driving, says Mark Gemma of Rhode Island's Gemma Law Associates, Inc.

Providence, RI ([PRWEB](#)) October 28, 2011 -- Although drinking and driving has dropped by 30 percent over the last five years, according to a recent U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention survey, [Rhode Island auto accident lawyer](#) Mark Gemma says more needs to be done to protect innocent motorists.

The same CDC survey, released earlier this month, showed that U.S. adults drove after drinking too much 112 million times in 2010 and accounted for 1 in 3 car crash fatalities – 11,000 total deaths – in 2009.

“These numbers are way too high,” said Gemma, whose [Providence personal injury law firm](#), Gemma Law Associates, Inc., represents victims of [drunk-driving accidents](#) throughout Rhode Island.

“Every time impaired drivers get behind the wheel of their cars, they expose themselves and innocent motorists to the serious risk of accidents, injuries and deaths,” he said. “Based on these numbers, we need to be more aggressive about preventing these senseless tragedies.”

According to the CDC survey, certain groups are more likely than others to drink with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) above the legal limit of 0.08 percent. In particular, the CDC reports that 85 percent of drinking-and-driving episodes in 2010 involved people who were “binge drinking,” or consuming 4-5 drinks during a brief period of time.

“A person who has just consumed that much alcohol can lose their ability to steer a car, drift across lanes and react slowly to approaching traffic, stop signs and stop lights,” Gemma said. “They may be unable to control their speed and focus on the road. That’s why drinking and driving goes beyond mere negligence. It’s completely reckless.”

The CDC recommends that states continue to enforce BAC and minimum legal age drinking laws, expand the use of sobriety checkpoints and require ignition interlock devices for anyone convicted of DUI / DWI, including first-time offenders.

Ignition interlock devices prevent a vehicle from being operated if the device detects that the driver has been drinking. In Rhode Island, the devices are required only for repeat DUI / DWI offenders.

Gemma says he would support more strict anti-drunk driving laws in Rhode Island, such as requiring ignition interlock devices for first-time offenders. He points out that, as recently as 2004, Rhode Island ranked first in the country in the percentage of traffic fatalities related to impaired driving and as high as fifth in 2008, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

But putting an end to drunk driving also demands better individual choices, the Rhode Island personal injury attorney says.



“If you drink, don’t drive. Instead, use a designated driver. Call a taxi. Take a bus. Call a friend or family member to help you get home,” Gemma says. “It comes down to using proper judgment.”

When a person drinks, drives and harms another motorist, victims need to hold them accountable, Gemma says.

By filing a [personal injury](#) or [wrongful death](#) lawsuit, those who are injured or lose loved ones to drunk drivers can recover compensation for their losses, including medical expenses, lost wages and pain and suffering. They may also be able to recover punitive damages, which are aimed at punishing reckless drivers, Gemma says.

“It’s important to send a message that drunk driving won’t be tolerated,” he says.

About Gemma Law Associates, Inc.

[Gemma Law Associates, Inc.](#), is a Providence law firm that has represented the people of Rhode Island for more than 48 years while earning a reputation for success in several practice areas, including drunk driving accidents, car accidents, personal injury, workers’ compensation, Social Security disability, divorce, criminal defense and bankruptcy law. The law firm’s staff works as a team to ensure success in cases and is backed by a state-of-the-art collection of resources, including an advanced computerized case management system and extensive legal library.

The firm represents clients throughout the state of Rhode Island, including Providence, Pawtucket, Warwick, Washington County and Newport County. To learn more about Gemma Law Associates, Inc., call (401) 467-2300 or use the firm’s [online contact form](#).

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