

Government seeks tech to address drunk driving

BY KEN THOMAS
 Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON | Technology that prevents a drunken driver from starting a vehicle holds the promise of greatly reducing alcohol-related deaths, the government and auto safety groups said Wednesday.

So far, however, the criminal justice system has not widely embraced alcohol ignition interlock devices because of long-standing questions about their cost and effectiveness, experts said at a meeting led by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The agency's chief, Nicole Nason, said technological developments and educating people in the legal system could help overcome many obstacles.

"They're not that easy to defeat but there is a perception out there that they are," Nason said.

About 1.4 million people are arrested for drunken driving each year. Only about 100,000 inter-



THE ASSOCIATED PRESS
Richard Freund, president of LifeSaver Interlock, holds the company's breath-alcohol analyzer during a news conference.

lock devices, however, are in use. They require drivers to blow into an instrument that measures alcohol. A vehicle will not start unless the driver's blood alcohol concentration is below a set level.

Judges and legal experts said the systems need to work together with broader treatment programs for repeat offenders. "There is no silver bullet, one tool that is going to eliminate DUI offenses," said Georgia judge Kent Lawrence, who started the state's first DUI/drug court in 2001.

New Mexico, Arizona, Louisiana, and Illinois have passed laws to require the use of the interlock devices for first-time offenders. Forty-five states and the District of Columbia allow the device for some offenders.

Adrian Lund, president of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, said preventing people with a blood-alcohol level of 0.08 and higher from driving could save an estimated 9,000 lives per year.

The offender usually pays for the devices. They typically cost \$100 for the installation and about \$80 per month for monitoring.

CRASH

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apparent resilience of groups such as al-Qaida in Iraq as they retaliate and seek new footholds.

The White House, meanwhile, sought to quiet a political tempest with Iraq's prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki.

President Bush, speaking to a veterans' convention in Kansas City, Mo., called al-Maliki "a good man with a difficult job." Bush added: "I support him."

Just hours earlier, al-Maliki lashed out at American criticism over his government's inability to bridge political divisions or stop the violence, warning he could "find friends elsewhere."

The spat appeared to ease, but al-Maliki's sharp words signaled a fraying relationship with his key backer

nearly three weeks before Congress receives a pivotal progress report on Iraq.

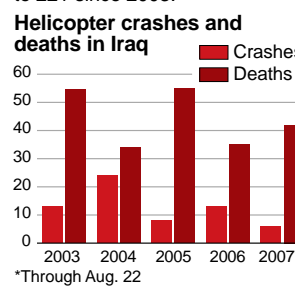
The UH-60 helicopter went down before dawn in the Tamim province that surrounds Kirkuk, an oil-rich city 180 miles north of Baghdad, said Lt. Col. Michael Donnelly, a military spokesman in northern Iraq.

He declined to be more specific about the location of the crash, but said the facts gathered indicated it was almost certainly due to a mechanical problem and not hostile fire. The final cause remained under investigation, however.

The Black Hawk was one of two helicopters and had just picked up troops after a mission when it crashed, Donnelly said. The four crew members and 10 passengers aboard were assigned to Task Force

Helicopter deaths

A deadly Black Hawk helicopter crash that killed 14 U.S. soldiers Wednesday, brought the death toll from helicopter crashes in Iraq to 221 since 2003.



Lightning, but the military did not release further information about their identities pending notification of relatives.

In Washington, a defense official said the helicopter was from the 25th Infantry Division's combat aviation brigade, based in Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

TAXES

Continued from 1A

Ballard said the potential decrease is based on a few factors, including the fact the town does not have any major construction projects planned beyond an addition to the town hall.

Officials plan to expand the town hall to give employees more room to maneuver.

Funding for the project has been secured, Ballard said, and construction costs will not affect next year's tax rate. The cost of the expansion has yet to be determined, Ballard said.

"We should be fine," she said.

Town officials do not have to approve the final 2008 budget until late this fall.

C-PP

Continued from 1A

Trott explained that when contractors went to replace the roof at the school, they noticed foam they were using was tearing up the roof's temporary patches.

At Corning Free Academy, contractors discovered lockers they were replacing were supporting the wall and duct work in some locations. A \$7,500 change order was required to bring those walls up to code.

The board also approved an additional \$2,547 to replace faucets in a Northside Blodgett bathroom.

"It may seem like a lot of money, but these are meant to last for 20 years," Trott said.

At least one board member

was not happy with the change orders.

"You're tying our hands," Neil Bulkley said. "I have no other way of dealing with this other than say yes. Otherwise, the work doesn't get done."

Bulkley called for more accountability when architects develop bids.

Ken Murdock, the district's director of facilities, said the original work that needed to be corrected was done in the early 1990s.

Money for change orders is typically included in a project's initial budget. For the current phase of the maintenance plan, the board built \$674,000 into the budget for incidentals and contingencies.

PROTESTERS

Continued from 1A

R-Hammond sport, located on Buell Street in the village of Bath.

Bath police allege the five Iraq war protesters were asked twice by Kuhl's staff to leave his office at 5 p.m. because it was closing.

The protesters refused to leave, Bath police said, and were arrested after they ignored a subsequent police order to leave the premises. They were arraigned Aug. 8.

In a court crowded by dozens of others waiting to appear before the justice, the five entered the room one at a time, walked to the bench and calmly pleaded not guilty to the single charge.

Some clasped hands as they crossed each other's paths to and from the bench.

So far, the five defendants have not asked for, or hired, an attorney.

"This is a very complicated procedure," Watches warned them. "You should have representation."

Watches said the five face a group trial before a six-member jury, or could opt for a bench trial in front of Watches.

Several of the defendants requested the option of separate trials.

Steuben County Assistant District Attorney Travis Barry said that separate trials would be a waste of time and money since the charges are identical.

Watches said the court would decide whether or not to grant separate trials.

The five facing criminal charges believe a trial - or trials - would provide them with a public forum on the war.

"We're going to put the war in Iraq on trial," said Scibilia-Carver, a defendant.

Tate, one of the protesters, said later the five will

meet to decide whether to seek legal counsel.

"We'll come to a consensus," Tate said. "We are a democracy."

After the court appearance, the defendants joined about a dozen others outside the municipal hall in a protest against the war in Iraq.

Most of the demonstrators - including the five facing charges - are members of Americans Against Escalation in Iraq, a national anti-war group which targets congressional leaders supporting President George Bush's policies in Iraq.

Wednesday's demonstration was the third in Bath in less than a month by the group.

Last week, the group invited Kuhl to attend their "Take A Stand Day" town hall meeting set for 7 p.m. Tuesday at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Bath.

SEVEN-DAY FORECAST

WETM 18 Storm Team
 Chief Meteorologist Scott Mayer
 Meteorologist Je Pasquarelli
 Meteorologist Matthew Szwedjka

Day	Forecast	High	Low
Today	P. sunny, P. sunny, humid, late t-storm	82	58
Friday	P. sunny, humid, late t-storms	90	64
Saturday	P. sunny, late t-storms	88	65
Sunday	P. cloudy, cooler, less humid	78	58
Monday	M. sunny	82	54
Tuesday	M. sunny	84	55
Wednesday	P. cloudy	85	57

National forecast
 Forecast highs for Thursday, Aug. 23

Fronts: Cold, Warm, Stationary
 Pressure: Low, High

WEATHER HISTORY
 In 1906, thunderstorms deluged Kansas City, Mo., with six inches of rain during the early morning, including nearly three inches in 30 minutes.

MOON PHASES
 First Full Last New
 SEPT. 19 TUESDAY SEPT. 4 SEPT. 11

SUNRISE | SUNSET

Sunrise today	6:24
Sunset today	7:57
Sunrise Friday	6:25
Sunset Friday	7:56

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