

How I Got My DUI Script 3-4-13 Length 18:30

Nearly one and a half million drivers are arrested each year for impaired driving. The three most common designations are DUI, driving under the influence, DWI, driving while intoxicated, and occasionally, DUUI, driving under the influence of intoxicates. DUI and DWI usually refer to drunk driving but can be used to include drug-impaired driving.

How I Got My DUI

Presented by CNS Productions

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I thought it would be a good idea . . .

Greg "I went to see my family who lived about 150 miles away and I thought it would be a good idea to buy a 6-pack of talls to keep myself amused on the long drive and maybe make it more fun."

Steve "In my younger years, if we were going to go drinking, we were going to go drink and drive. That's what we did. That was entertainment."

Stephen "I can't tell you how many times I drove drunk because I had to go get more booze."

Claudia "As I was driving, I just happened to pass a bar that had maybe 75 motorcycles sitting outside. I am not a biker. But, on a whim I decided what the heck."

Ryan "You know, even after a couple of beers...I was like, 'You know I'm great. I'm good to drive. The law's not gonna...they're not gonna hassle over me. You know, they're looking for the guys who really are drunk.'"

Medford cop "The way the law is for driving under the influence of intoxicants, it's about impairment, either a mental or cognitive impairment that's perceptible."

Kathryn "I guess he said at first I almost ran into him and then when he followed me, I was about a foot behind my boyfriend's car and that's why he finally stopped me."

Bob "I've listened to hundreds and hundreds of DUI stories. I love to listen to them because you never know what's going to happen. Some of them are pretty straight forward. Yeah, they went out. They had too many beers or too many drinks and they got pulled over. They deserved it and they understand that."

Stephen "My story is a little different. I went to the hospital to try to get a detox, and I drove there. I've been there many, many times in that condition. Usually, I was brought in by ambulance, and when they found out I drove, they were sick and tired of seeing me there so

they called the police and I was given a sobriety check in the hallway and arrested for DUI because I admitted I drove there.”

Prosecuting Attorney “If we have 40,000 arrests every year in Washington State for DUI ... the average was, a person of those 40,000 a person drove drunk or under the influence 87 times prior to them getting arrested for the first time.”

Tony “Oh it had to be more than a hundred, I would assume. That was my lifestyle. Get off work and hit a bar and then when the bar would close, drive home. I achieved, you know, 9 DUIs in my addiction.”

Anna “I got one and pulled over and then I drove without a license and then I got another one, and another one...it snowballed.

A majority of drunk drivers with suspended licenses continue to drive.

Lawyer “Not very many admit that they have a serious drinking problem you know in my office. It’s always, ‘this was a one-time thing,’ it was a mistake, we planned to have a designated driver that fell through, I waited for a taxi for two hours, I finally felt fine?”

The flashing lights came on . . .

Greg “I had a sporty little car at the time and drove a little too fast. So, by the time I got to town, it was 7:00 p.m. in the evening. So it was very early and the flashing lights went and I knew that they had me.”

Gregory “When I was driving impaired, I didn’t have any problems! Everybody had to get out of my way when I was driving.”

Lawyer “They stop a lot of people, many, many, many people and they don’t arrest anywhere near the people they stop. They suspect a DUI, maybe they stop someone...they do a little bit of investigation and ultimately they say, “I don’t think so,” and maybe this person did have a couple of beers, but they’re not showing the signs of impairment that I thought they might show.”

Steve “I got pulled over a few times by police officers who just told me to pour it out and go home. It depends on the level of intoxication. I believe it probably made me feel like I was a better...in the earlier parts of drinking before I got completely wasted, it probably made me feel like I was a better driver.”

Claudia “I drank several beers. As I was getting ready to leave, somebody asked me if I wanted to drink some tequila, which I did. I do not remember leaving that bar. I do not remember driving. I do not remember my arrest.”

Tom “I did fail to use my turn signals and that’s ultimately what got me caught, if you will, but I was already at my home, basically done driving and was still going to give me the drunk test, you know, and everything. So, yeah, it kind of ticked me off.”

Bob “The laws have changed so dramatically over the last 10-15 years that the police officer and law enforcement agencies are really out there looking for DUIs.”

Girl “The cop was actually really nice. He came to my window and asked if I had been drinking and I said yes. At first, he asked how many drinks I had had. At first, I lied to him. I said two.”

Patrol Sgt “If an officer asks you if you’ve been drinking and you have, don’t deny it. If you deny it and the officer can smell it, you’re already off to a poor start.”

Can I take the test tomorrow?

Moses “In most circumstances, it doesn’t take a lot of information for an officer to be able to make very simple observations that confirm that the person is under the influence and sometimes that’s as simple as getting out of the car and failing to notice that your seatbelt is still on, not being able to locate your driver’s license.”

Chris “They did the field sobriety tests, had me walk a straight line, had me touch my nose, put me in a dark room and did the pupil test. He started to do it with me and I told him I was that too intoxicated to do it. I couldn’t barely stand.”

Lawyer “Almost everyone admits that they screwed up. Some are a little bit pissed off about the way the stop went or the DUI. ‘I know I used my blinker. That police officer lied because I walked out of the bar at the right time.’ They almost all admit, ‘yeah, I should have took a cab, my ride fell through, and I shouldn’t have been driving, but, some of them have that but this police officer was way out of line.’”

Ryan “That made me very mad. It made me to the point that it made me hate cops...like they’re only out to get you. Right or wrong, they’re out to get you.”

Tony “You blow in the machine and they say, well you blew over...and even as I’m being transferred to jail, you know, I’m still thinking...well, I wasn’t that drunk. You know, that was the delusion with me and my addiction, you know. I still believed I was in complete control of what I was doing.”

Sgt “It’s all standardized. We do the same tests to the same people and we investigate and after the whole picture is taken into consideration – the driving, the odor, their speech, their performance on the field tests and then we make a decision on whether or not they’re driving ability has been impaired and that is when they are either placed under arrest for a DUI or released.”

Kathryn “I couldn’t do the test and I was upset. I mean, I was upset and I wasn’t being very nice to the officers so they weren’t nice to me. They handcuffed me and put me in the police car and took me to the detox and then I had to do a breathalyzer.”

Cop “OK, stand up and blow.”

In all 50 states, the legal blood alcohol limit is .08 so if a person tests above that level, they are guilty per se and can be given a DUI. Unfortunately, on average, the BAC is .16, twice the legal limit.

Chester “It was a 0.18 is what I blew right at the site and then of course it went up to almost a 0.2 by the time they got me in because the alcohol hadn’t yet metabolized.”

In many states, if a stopped driver refuses to take the breathalyzer test, the refusal can be used as evidence in court or in some states they can be automatically considered guilty.

Ryan “I didn’t think I could get a DUI for that. I thought that they would take me down there. They’d look at the cop like, oh you’re just being a jerk and let me go. And when I found out that I was getting a DUI for refusal and that there’s no way around it, lawyers or not. You know, it made me very angry.”

Lawyer: “Often times if you’ve been cooperative, you’re not belligerent, using profanity and yelling at the police officer, and calling him and his mom every name in the book. Usually they’ll give you the opportunity to call sober adults; a wife, a kid, a parent, somebody that can come give me a ride and they’ll just cite and release you.”

SGT “Though attitudes very rarely have any...I guess they don’t sway me a whole lot one way or another...most times. Gotta throw that most times in there because, again, I’m only human!”

And so to jail. . .

Josette “Going to the jail, it was my first time I ever went to jail and it was one of my greatest fears. I don’t know. I went and it was horrifying and I hated it but I learned a lot. I lived through it.”

Ryan “Long time coming. When I was actually in jail sitting there thinking about it, you know, if they pulled you over every time you got drunk, you’d be doing life.”

STEVE “I went and cried in the van and I thought, you know, I gotta get a lawyer for this because it’s my second one and it’s probably pretty serious.”

TILMAN “I wasn’t cuffed because I cooperated with the lady officer and I just got in the back and then started talking to myself about how my life is destroyed again. And the mess that I’m going to have to clean. And regretting not staying in the program.”

Anna “I went to jail overnight that night and then I did spend time in jail. I got out on work release and then I did go into treatment as well in lieu of some of the jail time.”

A number of states have established DUI courts where an arrestee, if eligible, can choose treatment instead of jail time and a permanent mark on their driving record.

Judge: “The key in drug court is accountability. We bring people before a judge on a regular basis, to talk about ‘How are things going?’”

Prosecuting Attorney “They’re intended to be therapeutic courts. They’re intended to treat the underlying problem. They’re intended to change behavior.

Judge: “And so for a missed UA, the sentence is 48 hours in jail. So that’ll be the sanction.”

Tilman “I was put in, you know, a holding tank and that time...for how many days or hours of sobering up and having reality slap me in the face, put me on a...into the frame of mind where I thought that man, if I just had a drink I could get rid of this and I could feel alright.”

Prosecuting Attorney “We have an inordinately high number of people who go back to their vehicle, they go back to drinking, they find another vehicle and they continue the behavior that got them in trouble the first time that evening. I have had, myself, probably a couple of dozen of double DUIs in one night.”

Bob “If you have a group of first DUIers come in, out of that one-third, they’re never going to get a DUI again. They got the DUI, the shame, the guilt, whatever it is, they learned their lesson. We don’t have to worry about them. Another third is they’re probably going to drink and drive again and they may or may not get caught. The last third is yeah, they will repeat. They will get a second DUI.”

Bob: What did you learn from your first DUI? Did you ever think you’d get a DUI again after going through treatment the first time?”

Paul: “No.”

Bob: “Why.”

Paul: “I figured I’d be more careful.

Bob: “Be more careful? Not get caught?”

Paul: “Yeah, not get caught.”

Bob: “Not get caught. So you think it’s really okay to drink and drive so long as you don’t get caught?”

Paul: “Yeah. I’ve been doing it for a long time.:

Bob: “So, do you think you have a problem with alcohol?”

Paul: “No.”

It’s not just alcohol . . .

Stephen “There was always alcohol and marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine. The friends I hung out with were all polydrug users. We didn’t just do one thing.”

Prosecuting Attorney “It’s virtually impossible for prosecutors or the legislature to track down every single drug or combination of drugs and alcohol in combination with all these drugs because we find about half of our drug cases are in combination with something else and most often they are in combination with alcohol. The second most common is marijuana.”

Darin “Well, I was smoking pot, but uh, I had to go pick up an ounce and I was short on money, so I turned around to go get the money and I got in a wreck on the freeway and rolled and the cop asked me if I was drinking and I said, “yeah”, and I blew a 0.08, so I got my first DWI.”

Chester “When I would be doing the heroin, it was...you know, it enhanced it even more. I was more sleepy, more drowsy, wasn’t real alert. I would tend to get the nod off type effect where you go down the road and have to wake up.”

Traffic Officer “Drug driving is another huge problem across the United States, even in our state. People get put on a prescription that says, “may cause drowsiness”, but they don’t think it affects them.”

Girl "Stopping alcohol wasn't the issue, stopping drinking. It really...my hardest thing was the Percocet and Vicodin...my hardest thing to stop."

Ryan "I had one when I was 17 and I was driving on mushrooms in the woods."

Moses "Whether it's spice, K2, any of the synthetic cannabinoids, the cathinones, all of these legal drugs...drugs that are legal only because they haven't been forbidden."

Patrol Officer "Illegal drugs, legal drugs....it doesn't matter. They can still be arrested for the DUI and it still has the same impacts that it was as if you were chugging a 6-pack of beer."

Others are involved . . .

Ryan "You know you can only get away with it for so long. You know, and you're gonna get in trouble. I just feel very fortunate that I didn't hurt anybody."

Greg "The turnaround point for me was the DUI victim's panel, where every month victims...people who have lost loved ones to DUI accidents tell their stories for people who have received DUIs."

Mother of victim "And I pulled into my driveway and standing on my doorstep was a very tall man with a very big cowboy hat in his hand and he said, "Are you Mrs. Farmer," and I said "No," and he said, "So you have a son named Michael," and I said no" probably 40 times, no, no, no, no. And he handed my Michael's watch and his billfold and there's only one way a coroner has those items. My son, was dead."

Patrol Officer "You walk up to that door, in uniform, with your Smokey hat on and you knock on the door at 2 o'clock in the morning, there's never any good news. And so people know...people already know when you knock on the door and they see you out there that something has happened to a loved one."

Police Sgt "Most people think it's that decision point they reach after they're done drinking, should I get in the car? Should I do it? Should I not do it? That's the big decision people make. What they forget are the little decisions leading up to that bigger decision. Prior to even going out, they should be thinking, okay, am I going to be drinking? If I'm going to be drinking, how many am I going to have? If I'm going to have more than one, maybe I better arrange a ride...maybe I better get a designated driver."

Woman who drove drunk "I do want to say I was in a wreck at one time. I wrapped my little car around a telephone pole. The passenger side of the telephone pole was my daughter in the passenger side of the car . . . and I still drove under the influence."

CREDITS