

FACT SHEET

PREVENTING EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL USE:
LIMITING DAYS OF SALE

How could repealing the ban on Sunday alcohol sales impact the health of Georgians?

Repealing existing limits on alcohol sales may result in increases in alcohol consumption, alcohol-impaired driving, fatal motor vehicle crashes and violent crime.

Alcohol Consumption

- Georgia youth and adults ages 14 and older consumed 2.1 gallons of ethanol per capita in 2007¹
- Georgia adults who engaged in binge drinking (four or more drinks per occasion for women and five or more drinks per occasion for men) binged an average of 4 times per month and consumed an average of 8 drinks per binge occasion in 2008²

Alcohol-Impaired Driving

- Four percent of Georgia adults reported engaging in alcohol-impaired driving (2004, 2006, 2008)²
- Driving under the influence offenses increase on weekends³, which may be due to increased police enforcement

Motor Vehicle Crashes

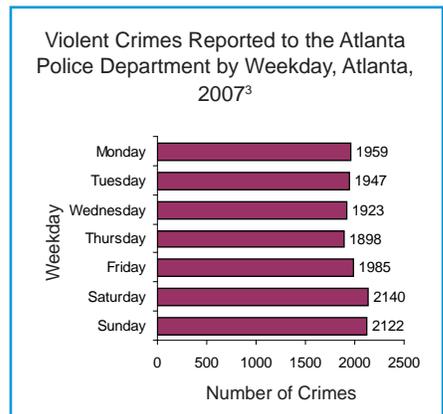
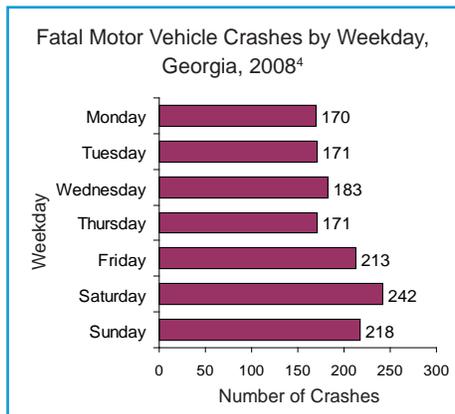
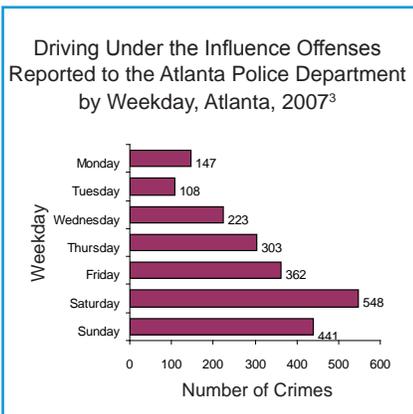
- In 2008, alcohol was involved in 27% of fatal crashes in Georgia⁴
- More fatal crashes occur on weekends, when people are more likely to be drinking alcohol⁴

Violent Crime

- Alcohol is involved in approximately 40% of violent crimes including murder, rape, sexual assault and robberies⁵
- Similar to motor vehicle crashes, the number of violent crimes increases on weekends³

Costs of Alcohol-Related Harms

- Each alcohol-related crash fatality cost Georgians an average of \$4.9 million in 2005⁶
- Among alcohol-related crash survivors in Georgia, the average cost of injury is \$145,000⁶
- Alcohol-related crimes result in substantial costs due to victim loss of life, earnings and medical expenses⁷
- Expenses from alcohol-related crime are also incurred by the criminal justice system⁷
- Thirty-eight percent of the economic burden of alcohol problems is paid for by government⁷



PREVENTING EXCESSIVE ALCOHOL USE: LIMITING DAYS OF SALE

Why are there limits on the days that alcohol is sold?

- Regulations limiting days that alcohol can be sold are intended to prevent excessive alcohol use and related harms⁸
- Excessive alcohol use is associated with increased risk for alcohol-related illness and injury⁹
- In 2008, 16 states including Georgia had a ban on Sunday alcohol sales for off-premises consumption (e.g., sales in grocery, convenience or liquor stores)⁸
- In 2008, 17 states and the District of Columbia had some restrictions on Sunday alcohol sales such as limited hours or types of alcohol that could be sold⁸

What scientific evidence is there to support limiting days that alcohol is sold?

Removing limits on days of sale⁸

Off-premises settings (e.g., grocery, convenience, liquor stores):

- Repeal of a ban on Sunday alcohol sales in New Mexico was associated with a 30% increase in motor vehicle fatalities on Sundays compared with other days in the week (1995)
- In the United States, increased days of sale were found to be associated with an increase in per capita consumption of spirits and beer
- Repeal of a Saturday ban on alcohol sales was associated with a small increase in alcohol consumption and alcohol-impaired driving in Sweden

On-premises settings (e.g., restaurants, bars, ballparks):

- In five studies of policies in the United States and Australia, expanding days of sale was found to be associated with increased motor vehicle crashes and alcohol-impaired driving
- New Sunday alcohol sales were associated with a small increase in individual-level consumption in Scotland

Imposing limits on days of sale⁸

Off-premises settings (e.g., grocery, convenience, liquor stores):

- Local repeal of a statewide policy allowing Sunday alcohol sales in New Mexico was associated with a reduction in motor vehicle crash fatalities
- An experimental ban of Saturday alcohol sales was associated with a 17% reduction in violence and 36% reduction in alcohol-related police interventions in Sweden¹⁰

Sources:

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