

## Huntington Beach's Downtown Alcohol Issue

Huntington Beach has the worst DUI statistics in Orange County and the state when it comes to alcohol-related traffic accidents where someone is killed or injured per a Huntington Beach Downtown Residents Association 2011 report. ([http://hbdra.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/HBDRA\\_REPORT.pdf](http://hbdra.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/HBDRA_REPORT.pdf))

Huntington Beach is the 20<sup>th</sup> largest city in the state with a population of 202,857, but it holds the number one position in the state for cities with populations of 100,000 or more for alcohol-related traffic accidents where someone is killed or injured. It is also number one for DUI arrests and nighttime traffic accidents.

One of the reasons for this seems to be the great number of alcohol licenses (37) in the .07 square miles from Orange Avenue to Pacific Coast Highway in the Main Street area. The downtown area as a whole has around 70 restaurants (not all serving alcohol), but this condensed area of Huntington Beach, .07 square miles compared to the city as a whole of 27 square miles, has a high density of alcohol licenses.

Not only are these bars and restaurants a draw for the Huntington Beach community and all of Orange County, but often tourists from all over the world converge on Huntington Beach in the summer months. This is especially true when professional beach volleyball tournaments or surfing events. Huntington Beach has twelve miles of sand and surf and is famous for these events.

Huntington Beach also has its local events such as an Art Walk every third Wednesday of the month, a street fair and farmer's market every Tuesday night and the Saturday and Sunday Art-A-Fair and Farmer's Market on the plaza by the Pier. All of these events bring the community to this .07 square miles. ([http://www.hb-downtown.com/Home\\_Page.html](http://www.hb-downtown.com/Home_Page.html))

The problem occurs when people come into the downtown of Huntington Beach in their cars, proceed to have a great time at all the restaurants and drinking establishments, but do not have an alternative plan for going home. As we know, in Southern California we are married to our cars, but there are alternatives.

Bus routes go near the downtown of Huntington Beach (<http://www.octa.net/sysmap0512/index.html>), but these only run until around 8:00 pm. The other options are taking a taxi (<http://www.huntingtonbeach-taxi.com/Downtown-Huntington-Beach-Taxi-News.html>) or there are a couple of services that will pick-up you or your car (Your car our driver <http://www.yourcarourdriver.com/> and Drunk Rescue <https://www.drunkrescue.com/>).

The other option is to stay in Huntington Beach. You have about four options in the downtown area (Hilton, Shorebreak Hotel, HB Surf Inn and The Hyatt Regency).

Of course, all of these options may be quite costly depending on where you live and where you stay, but in the end, it's cheaper than being arrested for DUI. Huntington Beach has had six DUI Checkpoints this year and basically every police stop begins as a DUI investigation. Just looking at the Huntington Police arrest log for September 8, 2012, three arrests were made for DUI so you can imagine what their yearly numbers are for DUIs.