

Toyota developing anti-drunk driving gadget

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A Toyota Motors engineer blows into a hand-held breathalyser

Toyota Motor said Monday it was developing anti-drunk driving equipment that would lock the ignition of a vehicle if high levels of alcohol are detected in the driver.

The system features a hand-held breathalyser, equipped with a digital camera, that detects alcohol consumption and photographs the driver's face for identification, a company statement said.

If the driver tests positive, the system either warns him or her, or locks the vehicle's ignition depending on the level of alcohol detected, Toyota said.

The carmaker is conducting tests with affiliate truck maker Hino Motors, and will install the equipment in selected trucks and other vehicles of fleet customers that include companies and government organisations.

The device will alert fleet administrators if the driver is detected with excessive alcohol levels, Toyota said.

Nissan Motor is currently developing similar equipment. In the United States, certain states earlier this year passed legislation requiring drunk driving offenders to install breathalyser ignition locks in their cars.

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