

Taking your breath away

Compact breathalyzer new to B.C.; provide blood alcohol in seconds

By Andrea Noble

NEWSLEADER

A Burnaby company has recently introduced a breathalyzer device that it believes will soon become popular among people who want to make sure everyone is safe before getting behind the wheel.

Frank Cucca at Regency Medical Supplies says he has already sold 12 units of the Bactrack B70 without any advertising.

"It's a very nice looking unit and about the size of a small cellphone," he says of the \$99 device. "You can put it in your pocket or purse and carry it anywhere. The beauty is you can pull it out and measure your blood alcohol content within seconds."

The breathalyzer is easy to use, Cucca says, because it never touches your mouth. You hold it six to eight inches away and push a button. As soon as you clear it, you can use it again in seconds. Included are double AA batteries, which last for about 300 tests, Cucca says. The Bactrack is one of the top selling breathalyzers in the U.S., he adds.

"The key is educating the public. We're not just trying to make a sale. Hopefully, we're saving someone's life. We need to talk very openly about it. We need to feel comfortable."

Cucca said it's also worth noting that if you're having a party and someone drives away drunk, you could be held legally responsible. A breathalyzer like this can make it easier to make sure your guests are OK to drive.

Ted Trippel, who also works at Regency, recently tested it out himself, along with his wife and a friend.

"Over at my house, we were drinking booze and eating food," Trippel says. "My friend is quite a drinker. He blew 0.13 and was just



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Kerri Johnston of Regency Medical Supplies shows off the BacTrack portable breathalyzer.

amazed. He drinks like that all the time, but he didn't believe he was impaired. He's a big guy and he thought, 'the rules aren't for me.' It was a big eye opener for him."

The legal limit, of course, is 0.08 and the Bactrack breathalyzer has a three second response time and has a highly accurate sensor.

Cucca says it's recommended to wait at least 20 minutes after drinking before blowing into the device. Otherwise, the results could be skewed. Most importantly, this unit works on everyone.

"It doesn't matter what age or background you are, male or female... it works on anyone," Cucca says.