Drinking Driver Task Force Planned Here

The first official step toward beginning a local citizens task force on the drinking driver problem will be taken at Tuesday’s Lafayette City Council tomorrow, Mayor Dud Lastrapes announced this morning.

Lastrapes told members of the media he expects the Council will approve a resolution for the formulation of the task force. The city and the Police Jury will each appoint six members and the Acadiana Safety Association will appoint two.

The mayor, who represents the municipal association on the Gov. Treen’s task force, said the local measures will coincide with recommendations on the state level. The governor’s task force met Friday and approved a nine proposals to battle the drunk driver problem.

Included among the recommendations are an open container law; an alcohol tax; stiffening of convictions; and administrative suspension of drivers’ licenses.

The local task force will have a 60-day duration and will examine the drunk driver problem in the Lafayette area, as well as statewide.

“We’ll consider what the governor plans to do and it will either dovetail or give additional information to that,” Lastrapes said.

According to information from the City Court, there were 851 OWI (Operating While Intoxicated) arrests in 1981. Seventy-one percent of the OWI arrests were made before accidents occurred; 29 percent of the arrests were due to accidents.