The screening devices, which are about the size of a large transistor radio and weigh about three pounds, show by means of lights the range of alcohol in the blood. If the device has an alcohol-blood ratio by weight of less than 0.05, the test is in the clear and will be so advised by a green light. If the blood has an alcohol content of from 0.05 to 0.08 percent, which is the range of intoxication legally defined as "driving while ability is impaired," a yellow warning light will come on as the alcohol content in the bloodstream is 0.10 percent or more, a red light will show, indicating the driver is in legal definition "intoxicated."

When the yellow or red light comes on, the driver can be expected to be charged with drunk driving and then taken to the nearest State Police station for a further test on a Breathalyzer.

The New York State Highway Traffic Safety Administration has assigned 24 screening instruments to the State Police for a one-year period and it has matched a $5,000 grant available for evaluation and other requirements of the project. Twenty of the instruments are the product of research sponsored by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and provide a visual read-out of the percentage of alcohol in the driver's blood. Four others were manufactured privately and were designed to give a green, yellow or red light, which is not possible to provide a percentage read-out.

Four devices are being assigned to the stations at Loudonville, East Greenbush, Brunswick, Saratoga (Maual) and Albany and four are being held in reserve.

State Police Superintendent William E. Kievan said the device could be the means for saving lives by the detection of drunk drivers who appear to be sober. "If the accuracy of the screening device is comparable to the Breathalyzer and other similar instruments," Kievan said, "it is probable that the screening instrument will become part of the equipment in all patrol cars and eventually make unnecessary the use of Breathalyzer and other similar instruments."

Kievan said the New York State Highway Traffic Safety Administration has created an "arrestable offense" if the device shows the presence of alcohol in the blood of a person being suspected of driving while impaired. The device does not indicate impairment and its accuracy may be questioned by a court.

In New York State, any person having a blood alcohol content of 0.10 percent or more is subject to prosecution for an "arrestable offense." The court can impose a fine of up to $500 and imprisonment up to three months. The court can also impose a driving license suspension for up to six months. If the person is charged with a second offense, the punishment is up to $1,000 and imprisonment up to six months. If the person is charged with a third or subsequent offense, the punishment is a fine of up to $2,000 and imprisonment up to one year.

State Police have set up a number of roadside alcohol testing stations in the Capital District and the State Police have been generating a great deal of traffic in recent weeks. The State Police have also set up a number of roadside alcohol testing stations in the Capital District and the State Police have been generating a great deal of traffic in recent weeks.