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This Holiday Season, and All Year Long: Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over

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Dexter, Missouri - The holidays are a time for friends, family, and co-workers to come together in celebration. Wherever you are whether at an office party, a family member's home, or out at the bar it is essential that you make the lifesaving choice to drive sober when the party ends. To help spread the message about the dangers of drunk driving, Dexter Police Department is partnering with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to get drunk drivers off the roads and help save lives. The national high-visibility enforcement campaign, Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over, runs from December 13-31, 2018. During this period, local law enforcement will show zero tolerance for drunk driving, as well as drugged driving, which is on the rise. Increased State and national messages about the dangers of driving impaired, coupled with enforcement and increased officers on the road, aim to drastically reduce drunk driving on our nation's roadways.

Sadly, the statistics show that we have a lot of work to do to put an end to drunk driving. According to NHTSA, 10,874 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes in 2017, equating to one person killed every 48 minutes. On average, 10,000 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes each year from 2013 to 2017. That's the equivalent of 20 jumbo jets crashing each year, with no survivors. In December 2017, alone, 885 people lost their

lives in traffic crashes involving a drunk driver. This is why Dexter Police is working with NHTSA to remind drivers that drunk driving is not only illegal, it is a matter of life and death. As you head out to enjoy the holiday festivities, remember: Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.

Drunk driving isn't the only risk on the road: Drug-impaired driving is also an increasing problem on our nation's roads. If drivers are impaired by any substance—alcohol or drugs—they should not get behind the wheel of a vehicle. Driving while impaired is illegal, period. The bottom line is this: If You Feel Different, You Drive Different. Drive High, Get a DUI. It's that simple.

“We understand that during the holidays, people are running around, busily checking off items on their to-do list and attending parties,” said Chief Trevor Pulley. “We need our community members to slow down and remember: It's up to them to make the smart decision to drive sober—during the holidays, and all year long. Drunk driving is a huge problem in our country, and, unfortunately, we're seeing a rise in marijuana use and drugged driving, too. Stay safe and stay sober on the roads.”

Dexter Police and NHTSA are reminding citizens of the many resources available to get them home safely. “Impaired driving of any form is not acceptable behavior,” said Chief Pulley. “It is essential to plan a sober ride home before you ever leave for the party. That's why, during the December holidays, we will make zero exceptions for drunk driving. There are just no excuses,” Pulley said.

Party with a Plan

First and foremost: Plan ahead. Be honest with yourself: You know whether you'll attend a party. If you plan to drink, plan for a sober driver to take you home. Is it your turn to be the designated driver? Take that role seriously—your friends are relying on you.

Remember that it is never okay to drink and drive. Even if you've had only one alcoholic beverage, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride service to get home safely.

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- Download NHTSA's SaferRide mobile app, available on Google Play for Android devices: (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.nhtsa.SaferRide&hl=en>), and Apple's iTunes Store for iOS devices: (<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/saferride/id950774008?mt=8>). SaferRide allows users to

call a taxi or a predetermined friend, and identifies the user's location so he or she can be picked up.

- If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact law enforcement immediately.
- Have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

During the holidays, and every day, please remember that drunk driving isn't only illegal, it's deadly.

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