



NEWS RELEASE

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This Holiday Season, Remember: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*

The holiday season is a time for family, friends, and celebrations. For too many though it is also a time of tragedy due to drunk driving. In 2016 so far, 63 people have lost their lives in 55 fatal crashes on Vermont roadways. Impairment by alcohol, drugs, or both, was a contributing factor in nearly one-half of those fatal crashes. To stop the tragedy of drunk driving crashes, injuries and deaths, law enforcement officers throughout the nation, including here in Vermont, will be out in force this holiday season as part of the national *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* enforcement campaign to remove impaired drivers from the roads. Beginning December 15th and continuing into the New Year you will see stepped up enforcement efforts, closely watching for anyone that is driving impaired. During this national campaign local, county, and state law enforcement agencies will be increasing patrols as well as conducting checkpoints throughout the state in order to prevent and detect drunk driving. In addition, nationally-certified Drug Recognition Experts (DREs) will be deployed in support of this campaign. DREs are law enforcement officers that are specially trained to recognize impairment in drivers who are under the influence of drugs other than, or in addition to, alcohol.

This time of year many people attend holiday parties and celebrations, and unfortunately too many people take to the roadways after drinking. In addition to the increased risk of death or serious injury, drivers who choose to drive while impaired also face a variety of legal and financial consequences such as jail time, loss of driver's license, higher insurance rates, attorney's fees and court costs, automobile towing and repairs, and lost wages. Of course the ultimate cost of impaired driving is causing a traffic crash that injures or kills.

Follow these tips to stay safe on the road this holiday season:

- For this holiday season and always, plan how you are getting home before you go out.
- Designate a sober driver ahead of time and help that person to stay sober.
- If you become intoxicated, do not drive for any reason. Call a taxi, phone a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation.
- If someone you know has been drinking, do not let that person get behind the wheel. Take their keys, take them home, or help them arrange a safe way home.
- If you see an impaired driver on the road, contact your local law enforcement. Your actions could help save someone's life.

Plan ahead. Play it safe. Eliminate the risk of a DUI.