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**Stay Merry and Bright this Holiday Season
Remember: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving***

[Troy, OH]— As the calendar year winds down, the holiday festivities start up. Make sure you stay off Santa’s “naughty” list: Always choose sober driving, and always plan a safe ride home before you party. To help keep Americans safe on the roads, Miami County Safe Communities is teaming up with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration this holiday season to remind all drivers about the dangers of drinking and driving. With holiday festivities and office parties taking place, it’s essential to plan a sober ride home before ever leaving for the event. So this holiday season, as you head out for a night of merry-making, remember: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. NHTSA’s campaign will run from November 23-December 12, 2018.

“The holidays are a time of joy and reflection, but also a time to use extra caution on the roads,” said Vicky Knisley-Henry-Safe Communities Coordinator. “Unfortunately, alcohol at many holiday events contributes to the number of impaired drivers on our roadways. Help us spread the message: Even one drink is one drink too many. If you feel buzzed, you are already drunk.”

According to NHTSA, 37,133 people were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2017, and 29 percent (10,874) of those fatalities occurred in crashes in which a driver had a blood alcohol concentration over the legal limit of .08 grams per deciliter. The holidays prove to be extra dangerous to drivers as more people—drivers and pedestrians alike—are out on the roads.

“We want to keep our roads safe this holiday season and help people understand that the only time they should be behind the wheel is when they are sober,” said Knisley-Henry. “It doesn’t matter if you’re male or female, or how much you weigh, alcohol affects everyone differently, and you do not have to be feeling or acting drunk to be too impaired to drive.”

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*. It’s that simple.

Drinking and driving should never be combined. It’s essential to plan a sober ride in advance if the holiday celebration will include alcohol. The alternative could change your life, not to mention the lives of your passengers, of pedestrians, or of other drivers and passengers nearby.





This holiday season, Miami County Safe Communities and NHTSA urge drivers to designate a sober driver before heading out for the evening. If you plan on drinking, plan on not driving. Safe Communities will also be partnering with Troy Rotary in their annual Designated Driver Campaign. The Troy Rotary Club distributes thousands of the gold and blue “Designated Driver” buttons to area businesses including bars, restaurants, banks, and drive-thru businesses during the holiday season.

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.
- 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 Local Law Enforcement.
- Have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

Remember to play it safe this holiday season and always plan your sober ride before the festivities begin. If you are buzzed, do not drive. *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.*

For more information, visit www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov.



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