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News Release

Arkansas City police warn of dangers of drinking and driving

ACPD, NHTSA urge all to drive merry, bright and sober this holiday season

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (December 20, 2019) — This holiday season, the Arkansas City Police Department is teaming up with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to remind all drivers about the dangers of drinking and driving.

The two agencies will work together to remind everyone of the importance of planning a sober ride home before heading out to enjoy holiday festivities and while en route to seasonal travel destinations.

"This holiday season — and every day — please remember: Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving," said Police Chief Dan Ward.

In 2017, 37,133 people were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes, and 29 percent (or 10,874) of those fatalities occurred in crashes in which a driver had a blood alcohol concentration higher than the legal limit of 0.08, according to NHTSA. In fact, 885 people lost their lives in traffic crashes involving a drunk driver during the month of December 2017 alone.

"The holidays have proven to be extra-dangerous to drivers, as more people — drivers and pedestrians alike — are out on the roads," Ward said.

Drunk driving isn't the only risk on the road — drug-impaired driving also is an increasing problem.

If drivers are impaired by any substance — either alcohol or other drugs — they should not get behind the wheel of a vehicle. It is illegal in all states to drive impaired by alcohol or drugs.

"Remember, driving while impaired is illegal — period," Ward said. "The bottom line is: 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, other drivers and passengers or nearby pedestrians.

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“This holiday season, the Arkansas City Police Department and NHTSA urge drivers to designate a sober driver before heading out for the evening,” Ward said. “If you plan on drinking, plan on not driving.”

Party with a Plan

First and foremost: Plan ahead. Be honest with yourself: You know whether you’ll be drinking. 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 OK 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.
- If available, use your community’s sober ride program.
- If you think you see a drunk driver on the road, please call 911.
- Have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take their keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

For more information about the Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving campaign, visit www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/buzzed-driving-drunk-driving/holiday-season.

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