



COUNTY OF FRESNO

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NEWS RELEASE

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MAINTAIN YOUR INDEPENDENCE THIS JULY 4TH – DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER



On July 4th, our country celebrates its independence with picnics, barbecues, and backyard parties. Don't let your independence be compromised by an unwise—and often deadly—decision to drink and drive. This Fourth of July, law enforcement will be out in full force in an attempt to put an end to drunk driving. This means you'll see increased enforcement accepting no excuses for those who drive impaired. This Independence Day, let's all work together to spread the life-saving message that drunk driving is unacceptable, deadly, and illegal behavior. It puts all drivers and passengers at risk, as well as cyclists and pedestrians. In fact, in 2016, an average of one person was killed in a drunk-driving crash every 50 minutes. As you, your friends, and your family head out to the July Fourth festivities this summer, make safety a priority. During the Fourth of July holiday weekend, make sure you plan for a safe week of festivities, keeping in mind this vital message: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*.

Please remember these drunk-driving statistics as you prepare to party this summer:

- In 2016, 10,497 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes—almost a third of all traffic fatalities nationwide. To put it in perspective, that's equal to about 20 jumbo jets crashing, with no survivors.
- It is illegal to drive with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher in all 50 States and the District of Columbia—no exceptions.
- Over the 2016 Fourth of July holiday (6 p.m. July 2 to 5:59 a.m. July 6), 188 people were killed in crashes involving at least one driver or motorcycle operator with a BAC of .08 or higher. This is a 28-percent increase from 2015, during which 146 people were killed during the same holiday period.
- During the 2016 July Fourth holiday period, nearly half of those who died in a vehicle crash were involved in a crash with at least one driver or motorcycle operator with a BAC of .15 or higher—almost twice the legal limit.

- Alcohol impairment among drivers involved in fatal crashes during the 2016 July Fourth holiday period was more than three times higher at night than it was during the day.
- From 2012 to 2016, there were 780 people killed in drunk-driving crashes over the Fourth of July holiday periods.

Don't let plans get away from you—it's imperative to your safety, and the safety of others, to plan a responsible ride home from your celebration. If you leave your house unprepared to get home safely, you may not be in the right frame of mind to make the best choices by the end of the night. Here are a few tips to help you prepare for a safe night of fun:

- Remember that it is never okay to drive after drinking. Even if you've had only one alcoholic beverage, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride share 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/saferide/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 potentially drunk driver on the road, call 911.
- Have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

Drunk driving can cost you your life, but it can also cost you financially. Here's how:

- If you're caught drinking and driving, you could face jail time. Imagine trying to explain that to your friends and family or your employer if you're unable to report to work.
- Drinking and driving could cause you to lose your driver's license and your vehicle. This could inhibit you from getting to work, resulting in lost wages and, potentially, job loss.
- If you kill or seriously injure someone while driving impaired by drugs or alcohol, you could face manslaughter or murder charges and substantial prison time.
- Financially, a DUI arrest could cost you up to \$10,000 in attorney fees, fines, car towing, repairs, higher insurance rates, and lost time at work.

This Fourth of July, commit to only driving when you're 100-percent sober. As you head out to celebrate, remember: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*. For more information on impaired driving, visit www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov.

The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) funds a Vertical Prosecution Team in the Fresno County District Attorney's Office that handles cases from arrest through conviction and sentencing in order to make the streets of our county safer by prosecuting drunk and drugged drivers.

The Media may email FCDAMedia@fresnocountyca.gov or contact Administrative Assistant Geri Benavides at (559) 600-4441 with questions.
