

NEWS RELEASE

Indiana Criminal Justice Institute



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Indiana Law Enforcement Continues Increased Patrols through December

Hoosiers are encouraged to celebrate responsibly by designating a sober driver

Indianapolis, IN. - The winter holiday season brings with it the tradition of celebrating with family and friends. In many instances, these celebrations will involve alcohol. That is why the Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving and the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) is once again urging Hoosiers to celebrate responsibly by planning ahead if they plan to drink.

This final reminder to deter impaired driving in 2009 comes on the heels of the *Safe Family Travel* initiative conducted by more than 250 Indiana law enforcement agencies last month to prevent impaired driving and enforce seat belt use. This Thanksgiving holiday mobilization resulted in more than 11,000 citations for seat belt, DUI and other traffic related offences.

In an effort to reduce the number of deaths and injuries on Indiana roadways this holiday season, the Indiana State Police, in conjunction with 125 local law enforcement agencies, will continue through December to conduct saturation patrols and sobriety checkpoints in 33 counties throughout the state. Participating counties have been identified as high alcohol crash areas and are part of the DUI Task Force enforcement program.

"Driving drunk or buzzed may potentially spiral into an unforeseen tragedy. That is why we want all motorists to reconsider the myths about drinking and driving," said ICJI Executive Director, T. Neil Moore. "Buzzed driving is drunk driving and driving while intoxicated just isn't worth the risk," Moore added.

In December 2008, 20 people lost their lives in alcohol-related crashes statewide. During the 2008 winter holiday period (6 p.m. December 24, 2008 through 6 a.m. January 5, 2009), 147 collisions involved alcohol. Furthermore, one out of every four fatal collisions during the 2008 winter holiday period involved alcohol.

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"Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving"

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“By making smart decisions and exercising good judgment, we can undoubtedly reduce the number of lives lost in Indiana this holiday season,” said Moore. “Drinking and driving can end up deadly no matter how many drinks you’ve had. Never get behind a wheel of a vehicle when you are impaired.”

Hoosiers can enjoy a safe and festive holiday without jeopardizing their life and the lives of the others on the road by following just a few easy steps:

- Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin;
- Before drinking, designate a sober driver and give that person your keys;
- If you become impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation to get home safely;
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, call 911;
- And remember, if you know someone who is about to drive while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.

For more information, visit in.gov/cji or StopImpairedDriving.org.

The Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving serves as the public opinion catalyst for statewide action to reduce death and injury on Indiana roadways. The Council provides ongoing support to state and local traffic safety advocates.

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