
2017 HOLIDAY DWI MOBILIZATION: PRE-ENFORCEMENT NEWS RELEASE

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MAKE A SOBER RIDE A HOLIDAY TRADITION

Friends Don't Let Friends Drink and Drive: Extra DWI Patrols on Steele County Roads Nov. 22 – Dec. 30

Owatonna, Minn. – Eating good food, spending time with family, exchanging gifts – holiday celebrations in Minnesota may include any number of traditions. A holiday activity that should never become a tradition is driving home after drinking alcohol.

Choices to drive drunk have contributed to 27 deaths on Minnesota roads from the day before Thanksgiving through Dec. 30 in the last five years (2012-2016 preliminary). To help keep the roads safe during the holidays, Owatonna Police Department and Steele County Sheriff's Office will be participating with law enforcement statewide in an extra DWI enforcement campaign starting Nov. 22 and on weekends through Dec. 30.

Officers, deputies and troopers from more than 300 agencies will be working overtime with funding provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety (DPS-OTS) coordinates the extra enforcement and education effort.

“As the holidays approach, it's a time of excited anticipation for many Minnesotans”. “Sadly, for too many other Minnesotans, the holidays are a painful reminder that their loved one is no longer with them. A drunk driver took their life or their loved one decided to drive impaired. Please celebrate wisely over the holidays, speak up to prevent a tragedy and always plan a sober ride.”

Choices behind the Wheel

Minnesotans are increasingly planning a sober ride throughout the year and over the holidays, but the number of motorists still driving drunk is never acceptable and potentially deadly.

DWI Arrests Year-Round

Year	DWIs
2012	28,656
2013	26,026
2014	25,399
2015	25,336
2016	23,392
Total	128,809

Holiday DWI Arrests (Nov. 22 – Dec. 30)

Year	DWIs
2012	3,215
2013	2,557
2014	2,565
2015	2,366
2016	2,136
Total	12,839

DWI Consequences

- Loss of license for up to a year, thousands of dollars in costs and possible jail time.

- Repeat DWI offenders, as well as first-time offenders arrested at 0.16 and above alcohol-concentration level, must use ignition interlock in order to regain legal driving privileges or face at least one year without a driver's license.
- Offenders with three or more offenses are required to use interlock for three to six years, or they will never regain driving privileges.

Speak Up and Plan a Sober Ride

- Plan for a safe ride — designate a sober driver, use a cab/public transportation, or stay at the location of the celebration.
- Speak up – Offer to be a designated driver or be available to pick up a loved one anytime, anywhere. If you see an impaired person about to get behind the wheel, get them a safe ride home.
- Buckle up — the best defense against a drunk driver.
- Report drunk driving — call 911 when witnessing impaired driving behavior. Be prepared to provide location, license plate number and observed dangerous behavior.

Local agencies participating in the statewide campaign are the Owatonna Police Department and Steele County Sheriff's Office.

The enhanced DWI enforcement campaign is a component of the state's [Toward Zero Deaths \(TZD\)](#) program. A primary vision of the TZD program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes – education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma response.