



## NEWS

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **This St. Patrick's Day, Plan Before You Party!** *Remember: Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*

**McCook IL.** – All too often, St. Patrick's Day celebrations turn deadly because of impaired driving. However you celebrate, make sure you and your friends stay safe this St. Patrick's Day by remembering one important piece of advice: If you'll be drinking alcohol, using cannabis or any other impairing substance, remember "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" and "Drive High. Get a DUI."

"This year, St. Patrick's Day falls on a Friday, and that means more parties throughout the weekend," said **Deputy Chief DeLeshe**. "If you've been drinking, using cannabis or any other impairing drug, make the smart choice and plan for a sober driver to get you and your friends home safely. Before you put your keys in the ignition, remind yourself: "Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving."

"We want everyone to enjoy St. Patrick's Day, but safe driving is everyone's responsibility.

In addition to looking for alcohol and cannabis-impaired drivers, the **McCook Police** will be stepping up seat belt enforcement, particularly at night when seat belt usage rates are lowest. Speeding, distracted driving and all traffic laws will be strictly enforced.

"Before celebrating St. Patrick's Day this year, decide whether you'll drink or you'll drive, or whether you'll use or you'll drive," **Deputy Chief DeLeshe** said. "If you choose to drink or use cannabis, designate a sober, reliable driver to get you home safely."

Always designating a sober driver and not letting friends drive drunk are just two simple steps to help avoid a tragic crash or an arrest for driving under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

Other important tips:

- Remember, you can be held liable and prosecuted if someone you serve is involved in an impaired driving crash.
- Make sure all guests designate a sober driver in advance or help arrange ride-sharing with other sober drivers.
- Serve lots of food and include lots of non-alcoholic beverages at the party.

- Keep the phone numbers for local cab companies handy and take the keys away from anyone who is thinking of driving drunk.
- Designate a sober driver before the party begins and give that person your keys.
- If you do not have a designated driver, ask a sober friend for a ride home, call a cab, sober friend or family member to pick you up or just stay where you are and sleep it off until you are sober.
- Never let a friend leave your sight if you think they are about to drive drunk.
- Always buckle up.

Pedestrians are at risk, too. If you are walking, keep an eye out for cars. Designated drivers: Be alert for impaired walkers who may not obey street signs.

The St. Patrick's Day enforcement campaign is funded by federal traffic safety funds from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and is administered through the Illinois Department of Transportation.