



2021 HOLIDAY SEASON DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER ENFORCEMENT CAMPAIGN

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Give the Gift of Holiday Safety: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*

Bloomsburg ,PA – This holiday season, the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is partnering with **Columbia & Montour County Police** to share the message about the dangers of drunk driving. NHTSA and **Columbia & Montour County Police Departments** want all drivers to remember this lifesaving message: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*. In support of the law enforcement community’s dedication to protecting the lives of residents in their communities, you’ll see officers working together December 15, 2021, through January 1, 2022, to take drunk drivers off the roads. These expanded efforts to protect against impaired driving will be conducted in a fair and equitable way.

According to NHTSA, 10,142 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes in 2019, accounting for nearly one-third of traffic crash fatalities. On average, more than 10,000 people were killed each year from 2015 to 2019 – one person was killed in a drunk-driving crash every 52 minutes in 2019. This is why **Columbia & Montour Police** are working with NHTSA to remind drivers that drunk driving is not only illegal, it is a matter of life and death. As you head out to the holiday festivities, remember: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*.

“It’s so important that drivers act responsibly, and that includes refraining from impaired driving,” said Sergeant Leonard Rogutski, Bloomsburg Police Department & Columbia/Montour **County Coordinator for the North Central Regional DUI Enforcement Program**. “The holidays are a special time of year for most, and we really want our community members to enjoy this season. We need commitment from our drivers that they’ll keep the roads free of drunk drivers so that everyone can have a safe holiday. This is a campaign to get the message out that drunk driving is illegal and it takes lives. Help us put an end to this senseless behavior,” **Rogutski** said.

During the month of December 2019, 837 people lost their lives in traffic crashes involving a drunk driver. During the Christmas and New Year’s Day holiday periods in 2019 alone, there were more drunk-driving-related fatalities (210) than during any other holiday period that



year. These fatalities are preventable, and drivers must remember that driving impaired by any substance – alcohol or other drugs – is deadly, illegal, and selfish behavior.

Columbia & Montour County Police and NHTSA are reminding citizens of the many resources available to get them home safely. “Drunk driving is not acceptable behavior,” said Sergeant Rogutski. “It is essential to plan a sober ride home before you ever leave for the party. There are too many resources to get you home safely. There are just no excuses for drunk driving,” Rogutski said.

Understand the Risks

Nationally, it is illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 or higher, except in Utah, where the limit is .05 g/dL. And the costs can be financial, too: If you’re caught drinking and driving, you could face jail time, lose your driver’s license and your vehicle, and pay up to \$10,000 in attorney’s fees, fines, higher insurance rates, and lost wages.

If you’re the designated driver, make sure you keep that promise of safety to yourself and your passengers. Stay hydrated with water and other non-alcoholic beverages. Support other designated drivers, too. It can be a long night, but people are counting on you, not to mention the other drivers, passengers, and pedestrians on the streets. Take the role of designated driver seriously – people are relying on you.

Celebrate with a Plan

Columbia & Montour County Police recommend these safe alternatives to drinking and driving:

- Remember that it is never okay 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 UBER & LYFT. If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact **911**
- Do you have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

For more information about the 2021 Holiday Season *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* campaign, visit <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving>.

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