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Contact: Det. L. Brooke Wetherell, Public Information Officer
(540) 434-2314
hpd-pio@harrisonburgva.gov

Don't Bet Your Luck On It: Drunk Driving is Deadly Driving

Harrisonburg, Va. – St. Patrick's Day is widely celebrated by Americans—Irish and non-Irish alike. The festivities are filled with friends, family, and endless parties. Oftentimes, these parties end with drunk drivers who endanger America's roads. Drinking and driving accounts for nearly one-third of vehicle-related fatalities in the United States. This St. Paddy's Day, don't rely on the luck o' the Irish to get you home safely—refrain from drinking and driving. Discuss these drunk-driving facts with your friends and family, plan to celebrate safely, and spread the word about the dangers of drinking and driving.

- St. Patrick's Day has become a deadly holiday for our nation's roads, due to the number of drunk-driving crashes and fatalities. From 2012 to 2016, the St. Patrick's Day holiday period (6 p.m. March 16 to 5:59 a.m. March 18) saw the loss of 269 lives due to drunk-driving crashes. In 2016 drunk driving killed more than 10,000 people in our country, and every single one of those deaths is preventable. Do your part this St. Patrick's Day to drive sober and ensure your friends do too.
- This St. Patrick's Day, Harrisonburg Police will be patrolling your community to ensure citizens follow the law and refrain from drinking and driving. Doing so not only keeps you safe, but it keeps other vehicle passengers and pedestrians safe.
- HPD officers will conduct alcohol checkpoints at various spots to catch drunk drivers. Don't be alarmed if you are pulled over. But remember: If you are caught drinking and driving, you will be arrested.

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- In 2016 alone, 60 people (39% of all crash fatalities) were killed in drunk-driving crashes over the St. Patrick's Day holiday period.
- Between midnight and 5:59 a.m. March 18, 2016, almost three-fourths (69%) of crash fatalities involved a drunk driver.
- Walking home from the bar after a night out partying? That can also be dangerous. In 2016, 34 percent of the pedestrians killed in crashes had a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher. Ask a sober friend to walk you home or arrange for a sober ride.

Celebrate with a Plan

- First: Always remember to plan ahead. You know whether you'll attend a party. If you plan to drink, plan for a sober driver to take you home. Is it your turn to be the designated driver? Take that role seriously—your friends could be relying on you.
- Remember that it is never okay to drink and drive. Even if you've only had one alcoholic beverage, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation to get home safely.
- Download NHTSA's SaferRide mobile app. 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 drunk driver on the road, report it to the non-emergency number at (540) 434-4436 or call 911.
- Have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get them home safely. Don't worry about offending someone—they'll thank you later.

For more information, visit www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov.

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