



City of Monterey Park News Release

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Monterey Park Police Department: “Be a Saint. Drive Sober”

St. Patrick’s Day is One of the Deadliest Days of the Year Because of Drunk Driving

Monterey Park, Calif. - March 16, 2015 - St. Patrick’s Day brings to mind shamrocks, leprechauns, pots of gold and good luck. But no amount of luck can save you from a drunk-driving crash. Unfortunately, March 17 has become a deadly day in the United States, with a dramatic spike in drunk-driving fatalities.

In 2013, there were 31 people killed and hundreds injured in drunk-driving crashes on St. Patrick’s Day. All in all, during the St. Patty’s Day period from 2009 to 2013, there have been 276 drunk-driving fatalities according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Every one of those lives was lost because of bad decisions. So whether you’re buzzed or drunk on St. Patrick’s Day, it doesn’t matter. Law Enforcement wants to remind everyone that “Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving-Drive Sober.”

The [Monterey Park Police Department](#) offers this advice to partygoers: Get ahead of the decision this year. If you know you’re going to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day with alcohol, then figure out a plan ahead of time for how you’ll get home. Don’t wait until you’re too buzzed to decide, and don’t let your friends drive drunk. “Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving,” so if you have anything to drink, count on a sober friend, taxi, or public transportation to drive you home safely. Not drinking? Maybe this St. Patrick’s Day, you’ll be the saint who drives your friends sober.

The bottom line is this: Too many Americans fail to designate sober drivers. Police, sheriff and the CHP are working hard to make sure every driver knows the dangers of getting behind the wheel after drinking. According to NHTSA, in 2013 on average one person was killed every 52 minutes in a drunk-driving crash in the United States. That totaled 10,076 drunk-driving fatalities that year.



Let’s make 2015 different. Use this party-planning checklist to stay safe this St. Patrick’s Day:

- **DDVIP:** The California Office of Traffic Safety DDVIP app is now available for free download on iOS and Android devices. Launched last year to treat the Designated Driver as the night’s VIP, the new app offers enhanced features, allowing users to “Map a Spot” with their current location to find DDVIP partnering establishments in their area or a “List of Spots” to search all participating bars and restaurants throughout California. Each establishment offers one or more free items to the Designated Sober Driver, from non-alcoholics drinks to appetizers. Users can stay up-to-date with the latest from DDVIP and see what other users are saying via its social tab. Also through the app, for those who want to imbibe but also make it a point to plan ahead, users can easily order a sober ride from Uber, Lyft or Curb – all from one screen.
- **NOW:** Even if you don’t have plans yet, plan to drive sober or designate someone else to. Save the number of a taxi or rideshare company in your phone so you always have a backup plan.
- **WHEN YOU MAKE PLANS:** A sober driver is an essential part of any party plan. Once you know where you’ll celebrate, decide whether you’re drinking *or* driving. You can only choose one.
- **ON ST. PATRICK’S DAY:** Before you take your first sip of green beer, leave your keys at home or give them to a friend. If you’re the designated driver, don’t drink. Enjoy non-alcoholic beverages

and brag about your VIP (very important partygoer) status online using the hashtag #designateddriver. Only drive sober or ride with a sober driver.

- EVERY DAY: If you’re impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation to get home safely. If available, use your community’s free ride program. If you know people who are about to drive or ride while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.
- DRUGS, MEDICATION & ALCOHOL= CRASHES: Recent statistics reveal that 30 percent of drivers in fatal crashes had one or more drugs in their systems. A study of active drivers showed more tested positive for drugs that may impair driving (14 percent) than did for alcohol (7.3 percent). Of the drugs, marijuana was most prevalent, at 7.4 percent, slightly more than alcohol.

The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) reminds everyone to “Report Drunk Drivers! Call 9-1-1.” Stay connected with OTS via: www.facebook.com/CaliforniaOTS, twitter.com/OTS_CA, and www.ots.ca.gov.

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