



STATE OF DELAWARE
OFFICE OF HIGHWAY SAFETY (OHS)

P.O. Box 1321
Dover, DE 19903-1321
www.ohs.delaware.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Lisa Flowers, Community Relations Officer (PIO)
Office: 302-744-2743
Mobile: 302-943-7293
Email: Lisa.Flowers@state.de.us

NEWS RELEASE

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This Labor Day, Remember: Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over

Delaware Law Enforcement Shows Zero Tolerance in Its Goal to End Drunk Driving

(Dover, DE) – This Labor Day weekend, families and friends will be celebrating the end of the summer. Sadly, this festive time has also become a dangerous time for America’s roads, as many drunk drivers get behind the wheel after celebrating. For this reason, the Office of Highway Safety (OHS) and law enforcement in Delaware are partnering with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to stop drunk drivers and help save lives. The high-visibility national enforcement campaign, *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*, runs August 19 – September 5, 2016. During this period, Delaware law enforcement will show zero tolerance for drunk driving. Increased state and national messaging about the dangers of driving drunk, coupled with saturation patrols and increased officers on the road, aim to drastically reduce drunk driving on our nation’s roads.

In Delaware this year, there have been more than a dozen fatalities attributed to impaired-driving and more than 1,800 DUI arrests. According to NHSTA, on average, over 10,000 people died each year (2010 to 2014) in drunk-driving crashes. During the 2014 Labor Day holiday weekend (6 p.m. August 29 – 5:59 a.m. September 2), 40 percent of the fatalities in traffic crashes involved drunk drivers, which was the highest percentage over the five years 2010 to 2014. And nighttime proves to be the most dangerous time to be out on the roads: During the 2014 Labor Day holiday period, 83 percent of drunk-driving crash fatalities occurred between 6 p.m. and 5:59 a.m. – as compared to half of all drunk-driving crash fatalities throughout the rest of that year.

“People need to understand that drunk driving is not only deadly, but it is illegal,” said Jana Simpler, Director of OHS. “Drunk driving is a massive problem in the United States, with more than 10,000 people dying annually. If you see a driver that you suspect is drunk, call 911 when it is safe to do so.”

The reality is that people aren't invincible. Of the 9,967 people who were killed in impaired-driving crashes in 2014, 64 percent were the drunk drivers themselves. Those 6,391 drunk drivers thought they would make it to their destinations, but they didn't.

"There are people who like to pretend that certain laws don't apply to them, but just to be clear: in every state, for every person, it is illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 or higher," said Jana Simpler. During the enforcement period, there will be a special emphasis on drunk-driving enforcement. Local drivers should expect to see more patrol vehicles and increased messaging about the dangers of drunk driving. "This is an unacceptable problem. Drunk driving is selfish and dangerous. We want to increase awareness with this campaign, but also see lasting results of decreased drunk driving," she said.

"Please, plan ahead before you go out," said Lisa Flowers. "Make sure you have a safe ride. Designate a sober driver or call a cab. You can also text SafeRide to 99000 for ride options. But, whatever you do, do not drink and drive."

This August, and every day, remember: there is never an excuse to drink and drive. If you choose to break the law, law enforcement will see you before you see them. Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.

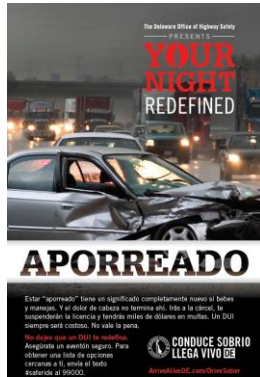
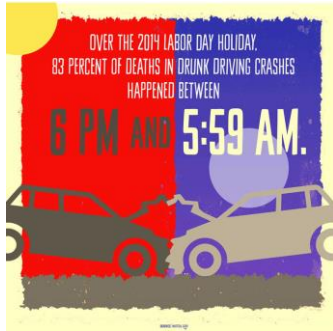
FAQs on the consequences of life after a DUI can be found at <http://www.arrivealivede.com/Drive-Sober/FAQs>. The link to OHS' website about driving sober, DUI fatalities and arrests is <http://www.arrivealivede.com/DriveSober>. For more information on impaired driving visit <http://www.nhtsa.gov/Impaired>.

The Office of Highway Safety (OHS) is committed to improving the safety of Delaware's motoring public by focusing on behavioral traffic safety issues such as impaired driving, seat belt use, aggressive driving, child passenger safety, pedestrian and bicycle safety, motorcycle safety, and teen driving issues.

For more information on the Delaware Office of Highway Safety and to stay up-to-date on news and announcements, follow OHS on Twitter – @DEHighwaySafe. For regular updates on all social media channels go to Facebook - ArriveAliveDE, Twitter - @DEHighwaySafe, and Instagram - @DEHighwaySafe, websites www.ohs.delaware.gov and <http://www.arrivealivede.com/>.

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