



MEDIA RELEASE

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Don't Drive Drunk in St. Mary's County this St. Patrick's Day

Data Shows 700 People Died in Crashes Involving Drunk Drivers on St. Patrick's Day From 2006 to 2010

As St. Patrick's Day approaches, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is reminding drivers not to get behind the wheel if they've been drinking. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports over 700 people were killed nationwide in crashes involving a drunk driver during the St. Patrick's Day holiday from 2006 to 2010.

According to NHTSA, on average, every 51 minutes a person is killed in a drunk-driving crash in the United States and the majority of these crashes involve drunk drivers who have blood alcohol concentrations of .15 grams per deciliter or higher, almost twice the legal limit of .08 grams per deciliter.

This weekend the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office is participating in "Project Saving Our Loved Ones" (SOLO). Project SOLO is a statewide initiative to combat impaired driving and underage drinking to ultimately save lives and reduce roadway deaths. Project SOLO will be conducted as a joint initiative with the Charles County Sheriff's Office, Calvert County Sheriff's Office, and Maryland State Police. The operation will deploy mass patrols on state and/or county roadways known to have higher instances of impaired-driving arrests and alcohol-related crashes. The high-risk zones have been identified through impaired-driving arrest and crash data collection and will be patrolled throughout southern Maryland.

To prevent these tragedies from occurring, please:

- Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin.
- Designate a sober driver and leave your car keys at home.
- If you're impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation to get home safely.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact local police.
- And remember, if you know people who are about to drive or ride while impaired help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.

"Whether you are gathering with friends or attending local St. Patrick's Day celebrations, if alcohol is part of the festivities, make sure you designate a sober driver or call a cab for a safe ride home," (Sheriff Timothy K. Cameron)

For questions or concerns regarding traffic safety or enforcement initiative please contact Sergeant Michael Butler #85, supervisor of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Traffic Safety Unit, at (301) 475-4200 x9006 or mike.butler@stmarysmd.com