



WASHINGTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sheriff Fred Newman

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR RELEASE:

For More Information:

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**Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk
This St. Patrick's Day**

Don't Depend on Dumb Luck—Designate a Sober Driver Before the Party Begins

For many Americans, *St. Patrick's Day has become a popular night out to celebrate with friends and family. Unfortunately, due to the large number of drunk drivers, the night out has also become very dangerous.

On St. Patrick's Day 2009, 37 percent of the drivers and motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes had a blood alcohol content (BAC) of .08 or above, according to statistics by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

"Whether you are meeting a few friends at the local bar after work or attending a local party, if you plan on using alcohol, never drive while impaired—and never let your friends drive if you think they are impaired." "*Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk,*" said Sheriff Fred Newman.

Additional NHTSA statistics show that in 2009, there were 103 crash fatalities on St. Patrick's Day. Out of that number, 47 people were killed in traffic crashes that involved at least one driver or motorcyclist with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher.

Sheriff Newman recommends the following easy steps, for a safe St. Patrick's Day.

- Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin;
- Before drinking, please 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 so you are sure to get home safely;
- Use your community's Sober Rides program.
- If you happen to see a drunk driver on the road, don't hesitate to contact your local law enforcement;
- And remember, if you know someone who is about to drive or ride while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.

“Driving impaired is simply not worth the risk,” said Sheriff Newman. “Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for driving while impaired can be really significant. Don't depend on dumb luck this St. Patrick's Day. Designate your sober driver before the party begins.”

For more information, visit www.StopImpairedDriving.org.

***ST. PATRICK'S DAY IS DEFINED AS 6PM MARCH 16 TO 5:59AM MARCH 18**