

Don't lose your independence, drive sober

June 29 2017 3:08 PM



SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Transportation and Illinois State Police urge motorists to make the Independence Day weekend a safe one. If your plans include alcohol, don't drive.

"To achieve our goal of zero fatalities on Illinois roads, impaired driving must stop," said Priscilla Tobias, director of IDOT's Office of Program Development. "Make the right choice and never take the wheel if you're under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Plan ahead and have a sober ride home lined up before you begin celebrating."

Summer is a time when more people drive, often leading to more motor vehicle crashes, injuries and fatalities. From 2012 to 2016, between June and August, 1,381 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes in Illinois. Nearly 25 percent of those fatalities involved

at least one drunk driver (0.08 BAC or higher). Between midnight and 3 a.m., more than half of the fatalities involved at least one driver who was legally drunk.

Illinois State Police will conduct roadside safety checks, impaired driving patrols and seat-belt enforcement throughout the state to reduce the number of injuries and fatalities during the holiday weekend.

"Throughout the Fourth of July holiday period, motorists will see troopers conducting roadside safety checks and other directed patrols to prevent senseless tragedies from occurring," said ISP Director Leo P. Schmitz. "DUI prevention requires drivers to take responsibility before getting behind the wheel and passengers in vehicles to hold drivers accountable. Our message remains clear. If you're going to drink, don't drive. If you choose to drink and drive, you will be arrested."

Here are some important safety tips to remember:

- Make plans in advance to get a sober ride home; never drive while impaired.
- If you are impaired, call a cab, take mass transit or get a ride with a sober friend.
- Don't let others who are with you attempt to drive while impaired.
- Promptly report impaired drivers to law enforcement by pulling over and dialing 911.
- Make sure everyone in your vehicle wears a seat belt. It is your best defense in a crash.