



Keep the green in your pocket, arrive alive on St. Pat's Day

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SPRINGFIELD — Be the life of the party this St. Patrick's Day, but don't count on the luck of the Irish for the safety of yourself and others on the road. The Illinois State Police and nearly 200 local police agencies will ramp up enforcement of impaired driving, seat belt usage, speeding and distracted driving laws from Thursday, March 14, through the early hours of Monday, March 18.

"Driving after drinking or using drugs is a deadly choice. There is no excuse for it," said Cynthia Watters, bureau chief of IDOT's Safety Programs and Engineering. "Don't wait until you're already impaired to figure out how to get home. Make the right choice early — it could be the difference between life or death."

In 2018, eight people died on Illinois roads on St. Patrick's Day. Two of those deaths involved alcohol.

"Don't push your luck this St. Patrick's Day, or the men and women in green pants will take you to 'county,' and I don't mean County Cork," said ISP Acting Director and Irishman Brendan Kelly.

If you are hosting a party:

- Remember, you can be held liable and prosecuted if someone you served is involved in an impaired driving crash.
- Make sure all your guests designate a sober driver in advance or help arrange ride-sharing.
- Serve plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages.
- Keep cab companies' numbers or ride-sharing apps handy. Take the keys away from anyone who is thinking of driving impaired.

If you are attending a party:

- Designate your sober driver before the party begins. Give that person your car keys.
- Ask a sober friend or family member for a ride, call a cab, take public transportation, use ride-sharing or just stay where you are until you are sober.
- Never let a friend leave your sight if you think they are about to drive impaired.
- Always buckle up — it is your best defense against an impaired driver.

The St. Patrick's Day enforcement campaign is part of the Illinois "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" and "Click It or Ticket" programs supported through federal funds administered by IDOT.