

Keep Your Independence On The Fourth: Drive Sober

June 30 2021 10:39 AM



SPRINGFIELD – This year’s Independence Day “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” safety campaign is underway and will run through the holiday weekend. The Illinois Department of Transportation and Illinois State Police are joining with law enforcement statewide to drive down injuries and death at a time when traffic fatalities continue to trend upward.

“Driving under the influence of alcohol or any other impairing substance creates a life-or-death situation for both the driver and everyone else on the road,” said Cynthia Watters, IDOT’s bureau chief of Safety Programs and Engineering. “Always make the responsible choice to drive sober.”

The campaign highlights both the “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” and “Click It or Ticket” messages and features stepped-up enforcement by state police as well as more than 200 police and sheriff departments across Illinois. The effort is administered by IDOT with federal funds for traffic safety, running concurrently with a media campaign reminding motorists that impaired driving has “Life or Death” consequences.

“July 4th is a holiday we celebrate with family and friends, enjoying barbeques and spending time together outdoors,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “This celebration of our country’s independence will be safer and more enjoyable if everyone does their part. Remember to make responsible decisions and designate a sober driver before the party begins.”

Through June 27, there have been 509 traffic fatalities in Illinois in 2021, an increase of 33 from a year ago. Of the 14 deaths that occurred during the July Fourth holiday period in 2020, two involved at least one driver who tested positive for alcohol.

To keep your Fourth of July celebrations safe, plan ahead. Designate a sober driver. Drive free of distractions. Always wear your seat belt. Other important tips include:

- Give your designated driver your keys before you go out.
- If you are drunk or impaired by marijuana or other drugs, call a taxi, take mass transit or call a family member to get you home safely.
- Use your favorite ride-share service such as Uber or Lyft or use public transportation.
- Use your community’s designated driver program, if available.
- If you see an impaired driver, pull over safely and call 911.
- Make sure everyone in your vehicle wears their seat belt. It is the best defense against an impaired driver.