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The holiday season is known for celebrations and traditions, but it is also known for being the deadliest season when it comes to drunk and drug-impaired driving. Iowa Law Enforcement across the state will partner with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) this holiday season to remove impaired drivers from the roads and help save lives. From December 13, 2019 to January 1, 2020, motorists will see an increased presence of law enforcement.

As we prepare for festivities with family and friends, the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau wants to remind all drivers of the dangers of driving impaired. You have to choose your role before the celebration begins. Will you drink, use drugs or will you drive? Remember, even if you have a little bit to drink, you could still be over the legal limit. Whether the drug is legally prescribed or illegal, driving while drug-impaired poses a threat to the driver, vehicle passengers, and other road users. Remember....if you feel different, you drive different!

Sobering Statistics:

- In 2017, 45% of the drivers killed in fatal crashes who were tested for drugs, tested positive.
- According to NHTSA, 885 people lost their lives in traffic crashes involving a drunk driver during the month of December, 2017.
- Despite the fact it's illegal to drive when impaired by alcohol, in 2017, one person was killed every 48 minutes by a drunk driver on our nation's roads.
- On average, an OWI could set you back \$10,000 in attorney's fees, fines, court costs, lost time at work, higher insurance rates, car towing and more.
- The financial impact from impaired-driving crashes is devastating. Based on 2010 numbers (the most recent year for which cost data is available), impaired-driving crashes cost the United States \$44 billion annually.
- From December 13, 2018 to January 1, 2019, Iowa law enforcement officers arrested 506 impaired drivers. Also during this time frame in Iowa, there were 17 fatal crashes killing 18 people. Four of these seventeen fatal crashes involved an impaired driver.

Celebrate with a Plan:

Always remember to plan ahead if you will be celebrating with an impairing substance. If you plan to indulge, plan for a sober driver to take you home. Call a taxi, friend or Uber! Is it your turn to be the designated driver? Take the role seriously and do not partake in alcohol or any other drugs. You are saving lives!

Cheers to not wrecking the holidays and making yours merry and bright!

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