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 **Law Enforcement Agency**

**Address**

**City, State Zip**

**Phone Number**

**Website**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**December 14, 2022

**Police stepping up patrols during the holidays**

**[City], IN.** — The [LEA] announced that it will be stepping up patrols as part of the Safe Family Travel holiday enforcement campaign. Starting this week, officers will be out in greater numbers showing zero tolerance for anyone driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

The department joins more than 200 participating law enforcement agencies in the campaign, which runs through January 1 of next year. While officers will be targeting impaired drivers, they will also be on high alert for seat belt violations and other forms of unsafe driving. Their goal is to help ensure people make it to and from their celebrations safely.

The extra high-visibility enforcement is funded with grants provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) through the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI).

"If you’re out celebrating over the holidays, make sure you have a sober ride home," said [your law enforcement leader]. “Driving impaired is costly and could be deadly. Not only could you kill yourself or someone else in a crash, but you could also face thousands of dollars in legal fees, jail time or a revoked license. It’s not worth the risk.”

According to early estimates from ICJI, 903 people have died in motor vehicle crashes so far this year in Indiana. Although still preliminary, this makes 2022 one of only three years in the past decade to break 900 fatalities. Moreover, if the pace continues, Indiana could experience one of the deadliest years since the early 2000s.

Data from the institute suggests that impaired driving accounts for a significant portion of those fatalities. On average, approximately one-fourth of the state’s fatal collisions are caused by drunk drivers every year. While this is cause for concern, tragically, driving under the influence tends to be more prevalent during the holiday season.

“There are four main causes behind the rising number of fatal crashes, all of which are completely preventable, and those are impaired driving, speeding, distracted driving and not wearing a seat belt,” said Devon McDonald, ICJI Executive Director. “Unfortunately, driving under the influence is the one we’re most concerned about this time of year.”

With officers on high-alert, motorists are encouraged to plan ahead to get home safely by designating a sober driver or by using public transportation or a ride service like Uber or Lyft. Even if one drink is consumed, never drive impaired or let friends get behind the wheel if they’ve been drinking. It’s also important to wear a seat belt, put away the distractions and follow posted speed limits.

Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol is illegal in Indiana and all 50 states. Those who choose to drive impaired are, not only risking their life and the lives of others, but also could face an arrest, jail time, and substantial fines and attorney fees. The average drunk driving arrest costs up to $10,000.

Motorists are encouraged to contact the department or call 911 if they encounter an impaired driver on the road.

To learn more about [LEA], please visit: [LEA’s website].

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