

NEWS RELEASE

MANSFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

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SUBJECT: St. Patrick's Day Traffic Enforcement

No. 6

The Mansfield Division of Police Urges Motorists To Drive Responsibly this St. Patrick's Day Designate a Sober Driver Before the Party Begins

[Mansfield, Ohio] – The Mansfield Division of Police urges the public to help keep the streets safe this St. Patrick's Day by drinking responsibly and designating a sober driver before heading to the party or the pub. Statistics from the Ohio Department of Public Safety showed that in 2009, there were 298,646 crashes in the State of Ohio. During the month of March there were 19,668 crashes with 63 fatalities and 7,300 reported injuries.

"St. Patrick's Day is supposed to be a time to celebrate Irish Heritage and gather with friends, but it can quickly end in tragedy due to impaired driving," said Lt. Michael Higgins. "If you plan on drinking, don't rely on luck to keep you safe or to keep you out of trouble. Be responsible and take the appropriate precautions.

The Mansfield Division of Police recommends the following tips:

1. Plan a safe way home before your celebration begins;
2. If you plan to get a ride home with someone else, designate a sober driver before the drinking starts;
3. If you are impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation so you are sure to get home safely;
4. If you happen to see a drunk driver on the road, don't hesitate to contact your local law enforcement agency;
5. And remember, if you know someone who is about to drive or ride a motorcycle while impaired, take their keys and help them make arrangements to get where they are going safely.

"Impaired driving or riding with someone who is impaired is an extremely risky thing to do," said Lt. Higgins. "If you plan on using alcohol, plan ahead and look out for your friends too. Remember, friends don't let friends drive drunk."

According to NHTSA research, impaired driving remains one of America's deadliest problems. In 2009, 1022 people in Ohio were killed in motor vehicle crashes. Out of that number, 390 people were killed in traffic crashes that involved at least one driver or motor cycle operator with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher. To learn more, please visit www.StopImpairedDriving.org.