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This St. Patrick's Day, Plan Before You Party!
Remember: Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving

Ventura, CA— St. Patrick's Day has become one of the nation's biggest times to celebrate and party. But unfortunately, too many people are taking to the roads after drinking alcohol making the holiday one of our most dangerous. In fact, 30 people were killed in drunk driving crashes across the nation during the St. Patrick's Day holiday period (6 p.m. March 16 to 5:59 a.m. March 18) in 2015.

That's why the Ventura Police Department is teaming up with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to reach all drivers with an important life-saving message and warning: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.*

According to NHTSA, 252 people lost their lives in drunk driving-related crashes during the St. Patrick's Day holiday period from 2011-2015. More than a fourth of them were killed in drunk driving crashes that occurred in the early morning, post-party hours (midnight to 5:59 a.m.).

"These needless deaths could have been prevented," said Sergeant Brunk. "Planning a sober ride home before the party begins is the first step in staying safe on St. Patrick's Day. Don't wait until you've already been drinking to make your transportation decision. Designate your sober driver in advance, and never get behind the wheel if you've been drinking. Remember: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.*"

If you plan to celebrate this St. Patrick's Day, follow these tips to stay safe:

- Before celebrating St. Patrick's Day this year, decide whether you'll drink or you'll drive. You can't do both.
- If you're planning on driving, commit to staying sober. If you've been out drinking and then get behind the wheel, you run the risk of causing a crash or getting arrested for a DUI.
- If you have been drinking, call a taxi, sober friend or family member or use public transportation. Also, try NHTSA's SaferRide mobile app, which helps users call a taxi or a friend for a ride home and identify their location so they can be picked up.
- Help those around you be responsible, too. Walking while intoxicated can also be deadly, as lack of attention could put you at risk of getting hit by a vehicle. If someone you know is drinking, do not let them get behind the wheel and help them find a sober ride home.
- If you see someone who appears to be driving drunk, call the police. Your actions could help save a life.

The complete press release, including suspect description, can be viewed online at www.venturapd.org

If you have any information about this crime, you can make an anonymous call to Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS.

If your information leads to an arrest, you could receive a cash reward of up to \$1,000.

Impaired driving causes tragedies all year round. According to NHTSA, 35,092 people were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2015, and 10,265 (29%) of those fatalities occurred in drunk-driving-related crashes.

Remember this St. Patrick's Day: Plan Before You Party! *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. For more information, visit www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov.



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