

Celebrate Cinco de Mayo With a Designated Sober Driver

Impaired Driving Enforcement Operations Planned this Weekend

Cinco de Mayo has become a deadly holiday due to drunk and drugged driving. Forty people were killed in impaired driving crashes across the nation during the Cinco de Mayo holiday period in 2015.

Officers from the Ventura Police Department's DUI Enforcement Team will be deploying this weekend to stop and arrest alcohol and drug-impaired drivers. DUI Saturation Patrols and a DUI/Drivers License Checkpoint will be deployed on May 5, 2017, at an undisclosed location within the city limits between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m. in areas with high frequencies of DUI collisions and/or arrests.

High Visibility Enforcement using both DUI checkpoints and DUI Saturation Patrols has proven to lower the number of persons killed and injured in alcohol or drug impaired crashes. Research shows that crashes involving an impaired driver can be reduced by up to 20 percent when well-publicized proactive DUI operations are conducted routinely.

From 2011-2015, 270 people were killed nationwide in impaired driving crashes during the Cinco de Mayo holiday period. In California, alcohol involved collisions led to 1,155 deaths and nearly 24,000 injuries in 2014 because someone failed to designate a sober driver. Over the course of the past three years from April 1, 2014 to March 31, 2017, Ventura Police Officers have investigated 341 DUI collisions which claimed 1 life and resulted in another 153 injuries.

Officers will be looking for signs of alcohol and/or drug impairment. When possible, specially trained officers will be available to evaluate those suspected of drug-impaired driving, which now accounts for a growing number of impaired driving crashes.

In recent years, California has seen a disturbing increase in drug-impaired driving crashes. Ventura PD supports the new effort from the Office of Traffic Safety that aims to educate all drivers that "DUI Doesn't Just Mean Booze." If you take prescription drugs, particularly those with a driving or operating machinery warning on the label, you might be impaired enough to get a DUI. Marijuana can also be impairing, especially in combination with alcohol or other drugs, and can result in a DUI.

Plan your sober ride home before the party begins this Cinco de Mayo. Drivers are encouraged to download the Designated Driver VIP, or "DDVIP," free mobile app for Android or iPhone. The DDVIP app helps find nearby bars and restaurants that feature free incentives for the designated sober driver, from free non-alcoholic drinks to free appetizers and more.

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.

The feature-packed app even has social media tie-ins and even a tab for the non-DD to call Uber, Lyft or Curb.

The cost of a ride home is cheap! Drivers caught driving impaired can expect the impact of a DUI arrest to include jail time, fines, fees, DUI classes, license suspensions and other expenses that can exceed \$10,000 not to mention the embarrassment when friends and family find out.

Funding for this DUI operation is provided to the Ventura Police Department by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, reminding everyone to 'Report Drunk Driver – Call 9-1-1'.

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