



NEWS RELEASE

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Ventura Police Department reminds you to celebrate the holiday season responsibly

With the holiday season fast approaching, the Ventura Police Department reminds community members to be responsible and not drive after drinking or take drugs that affect your ability to operate a vehicle.

To help keep our roadways safe, the Ventura Police Department will be conducting saturation patrols. The enforcement efforts coincide with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) *Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving* campaign, which runs from Nov. 23 to Dec. 12.

"The holidays are a time to enjoy the company of family and friends, but also a time to be extra careful on the roads," said Corporal Al Gomez. "Sadly, the holiday season leads to an increase in drivers who shouldn't be driving. It's important for us to let people know that if you feel different, you drive different."

During the 2017 Thanksgiving (Nov. 22-26) and Christmas (Dec. 22-25) holidays, 99 people were killed and nearly 4,500 people were injured on California roads. Of those deadly crashes, nearly 35 percent involved alcohol.

With holiday parties taking place, it's important to plan ahead and make sure everyone has a sober ride home. Even if you've had only one drink, play it safe and designate a sober driver or use a ride-share service to get home. If you plan on drinking, don't plan on driving.

The Ventura Police Department also supports efforts by the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to inform drivers that "DUI Doesn't Just Mean Booze." Prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications and marijuana can also be impairing, especially in combination with alcohol or other drugs, and can result in a DUI.

"Don't spoil the holiday and put yourself and others at risk by driving impaired," said Traffic Sergeant Michael Brown. "People need to understand that the only time they should be driving is when they are sober."

Funding for holiday season enforcement operations are provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.