



NEWS RELEASE

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Enjoy a Safe and Sober St. Patrick's Day

Ventura Police Department working with community to keep roadways safe

Ventura, Calif. — For many, St. Patrick's Day is a fun and festive occasion celebrated every year on March 17 with green as far as the eye can see. As the festive holiday approaches, don't forget to prepare responsibly and have a plan to get home safely.

The Ventura Police Department will have officers on patrol looking for drivers suspected of driving under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs starting on Tuesday, March 16 through Wednesday, March 17, from 7 p.m. to 3 a.m.

"If drinking is part of your plan, plan on designating a sober driver and find a safe way home," said Sergeant Michael Brown. "Don't even put yourself in a position where you need to ask if you're okay to drive. Buzzed driving is drunk driving."

With the average person consuming 4.2 alcoholic drinks on St. Patrick's Day, it has become one of the most popular drinking holidays in the United States. In 2019, seven people were killed, and 116 others were injured in crashes caused by driving under the influence in California on St. Patrick's Day.

Not only does driving under the influence put yourself and others on the road at risk, but it also hurts financially; attorneys' fees, fines, court costs, insurance rate hikes and car repairs can reach \$15,000 or more in California.

"It's simple: don't drink and drive," Commander Darrick Brunk said. "Stay at home or find a sober driver."

California's public health guidance advises limiting mixing with people you don't live with to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Although many St. Patrick's Day celebrations will be held virtually this year, it's important to designate a sober driver or stay at home for the night.

If you ever see a suspected drunk driver on the road, call 9-1-1.

Funding for this program is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

To learn more about the Office of Traffic Safety grant and VPD's educational efforts, visit ots.ca.gov or contact Emily Graves, Community Outreach Specialist with the Ventura Police Department, at egraves@cityofventura.ca.gov.

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