



PRESS RELEASE

buzzed
driving is
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driving

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 28, 2015

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On Halloween, and Every Day, Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving *The AVOID the18 Reminds Halloween Partiers against Drinking and Driving*

Visalia, CA— This Halloween, the Tulare-Kings Counties Avoid the 18 DUI Task Force is reminding Halloween partiers that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. If your Halloween party involves alcohol then you have to make a plan to get home without getting behind the wheel.

“If you want to stay safe this Halloween then make a plan to get home without driving if you’ve been drinking,” said Sgt. James Andrews “Even one drink impairs judgment, so plan to get home by taxi, ride share, mass transit, or designate a sober driver. Buzzed driving is drunk driving, so think ahead to stay safe.”

The Avoid the18 DUI Task Force is deploying DUI Saturation Patrols with extra DUI officers in the cities of Visalia, Porterville, Woodlake, Hanford, Lemoore and Avenal Halloween night to supplement routine patrol officers on one of the most deadly nights of the years. Officers will be looking for the tale-tell signs of alcohol and or drug impairment during each enforcement contact, all weekend long as many will be attending parties where alcohol is served.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 43 percent of all people killed in motor vehicle crashes on Halloween night (6 p.m. October 31st – 5:59 a.m. November 1st) from 2009 to 2013 were in crashes involving a drunk driver. On Halloween Night alone 119 people lost their lives over that same period nationwide. Children out trick-or-treating and the parents accompanying them are also at risk, as 19 percent of fatal pedestrian crashes on Halloween night (2009-2013) involved drunk drivers.

It is illegal everywhere in America to drive with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher. In 2013, 10,076 people were killed in drunk driving crashes with 867 of those in California alone along with 23,000 others seriously injured across the state. Even if you drive drunk and aren’t killed or seriously injured you could end up paying as much \$10,000 for a DUI.

Recent statistics reveal that 30 percent of drivers in fatal crashes had one or more drugs in their systems. A study of active drivers showed more tested positive for drugs that may impair driving (14 percent) than did for alcohol (7.3 percent). Of the drugs, marijuana was most prevalent, at 7.4 percent, slightly more than alcohol. Everyone should be mindful that if you’re taking medication – whether prescription or over-the-counter – drinking even small amounts of alcohol can greatly intensify the impairment effects.

Law Enforcement emphasizes the preventable nature of drunk driving reminding everyone that all it takes is a little planning ahead. Designate a sober driver or call a cab. But whatever you do, don't drink and drive. The California Office of Traffic Safety DDVIP (Designated Driver VIP) mobile app is now available for free download on iOS and Android devices. Launched last year, the new DDVIP app offers enhanced features, allowing users to "Map a Spot" with their current location to find DDVIP partnering establishments in their area or a "List of Spots" to search all participating bars and restaurants throughout California. Users will be offered free incentives at each bar to celebrate their life saving role. They can stay up-to-date with the latest from DDVIP and see what other users are saying via its social tab. Also through the app, for those who want to imbibe but also make it a point to plan ahead, users can easily order a sober ride from Uber, Lyft or Curb – all from one screen.

Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving, so follow these simple tips to stay safe:

- Plan a safe way to get home ***before*** you attend the party. Alcohol impairs judgment, as well as reaction time. If you're drunk you're more like to choose to drive drunk.
- Designate a sober driver; take public transportation, a car service, or a call a sober friend or family member to get home.
- Walking while impaired can be just as dangerous as drunk driving. Designate a sober friend to walk you home.
- Report Drunk Drivers – Call 911.
- If you see someone you think is about to drive while impaired, take their keys and help them get home safely.

The Avoid the18 campaign is partnering with officers from around the region as part of the national and statewide effort. Funding for these special operations are provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

