



VISALIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

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This July Fourth, the Visalia Police Department Wants You to Remember: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*

This year, as we celebrate our country's birthday, thousands of families will take to their cars, driving to neighborhood cookouts, family picnics, and other summer festivities. Sadly, some of those families' Independence Day will end in tragedy, as too many irresponsible people will decide to drink and or use drugs and drive. Unfortunately, their bad choices will have lasting effects on families.

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.

During the Fourth of July holiday period, which starts at 6 p.m. Friday, June 30, and ends on Wednesday, July 5 at 5:59 a.m., police will be out in full force reminding drivers to *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*. Law enforcement will be working region-wide, looking to put a stop to this dangerous deadly crime.

In recent years, California has seen a disturbing increase in drug-impaired driving crashes. Visalia 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.

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 drug impaired driving crashes.

Expect to see increased sobriety checkpoints, roving and saturation patrols, and other enforcement efforts. These enforcement campaigns are vital to public safety, and save lives. Statistics show us that drug and alcohol impaired driving is a deadly epidemic in our nation. In fact, in 2015, 10,265 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes—almost a third of all traffic fatalities nationwide. As you head out to enjoy the long weekend, keep the following in mind:

- It is illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 or higher in all 50 states. Yet, over the 2015 Fourth of July holiday period (6 p.m. July 2 to 5:59 a.m. July 6), 146 people were killed in crashes involving at least one driver or motorcycle rider with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher, and 92 people died in crashes involving at least one driver or motorcycle operator with a BAC of .15 or higher – almost twice the legal limit.



- During the 2015 Fourth of July holiday period, 46 percent of the young drivers (18 to 34 years old) killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes were alcohol-impaired (BAC of .08 or higher).
- The rate of alcohol impairment among drivers involved in fatal crashes during the 2015 July Fourth holiday period was over three times higher at night than it was during the day.
- This year, law enforcement in the Visalia Police Department is taking part in the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* campaign over the Fourth of July holiday to end impaired driving. This means increased enforcement with zero tolerance for those who drive drunk or impaired by drugs.
- The number of drunk-driving fatalities during the 2015 July Fourth holiday period is no exception to this trend. From 2011 to 2015, there were 751 people killed in drunk-driving crashes alone over the Fourth of July holiday periods with scores more impaired by medications, illegal drugs and marijuana.
- From 2014 to 2015, the number of overall drunk-driving-crash fatalities increased by 3 percent in the United States—from 9,943 people killed in 2014 to 10,265 in 2015.

Know You're Going to Party? Make a Plan.

No matter the occasion, drinking, mixing medications with alcohol or using marijuana and driving have deadly consequences—and it can cost you your freedom. A DUI arrest costs, on average, \$10,000, but the punishment doesn't end with the financial burden. When convicted of a DUI you will face jail time, the loss of their driver licenses, higher insurance rates, and dozens of other hefty expenses, from car towing and repairs to attorney fees, fines, court costs, lost time at work, and more.

So, what's the best bet for a safe ride home? Before the fun even starts, plan your safe ride home with our helpful tips.

- Remember that it is never okay to drink, mix medications with alcohol or use marijuana and drive. Designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation to get home safely.
- 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 feature-packed app even has social media tie-ins and even a tab for the non-DD to call Uber, Lyft or Curb.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, report them, Call 911!
- If someone is impaired? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

Remember, with all of today's options for getting home safely, there's no excuse for getting behind the wheel impaired by booze, medications or marijuana. Driving impaired is never worth the risk, not to yourself or anyone else. If law enforcement pulls you over for drunk driving this Fourth of July, you can count on being arrested.

For more information about the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* campaign, visit www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov

