

Press Release



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Greene County

Greene County Public Health
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Plan Ahead This Labor Day Holiday: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*

XENIA, OH — Many Americans look to the Labor Day holiday weekend as the unofficial end of summertime. No matter how you plan to celebrate the end of the season this year, make sure you plan it safely. This Labor Day weekend, law enforcement agencies in Greene County are participating in the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* impaired driving awareness campaign, which runs from August 18 through September 6, 2021. In support of the law enforcement community's dedication to protecting the lives of residents in their communities, you'll see officers working together during this holiday weekend to take drunk drivers off the roads. These expanded efforts to protect against impaired driving will be conducted in a fair and equitable way.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 10,142 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes in 2019 that involved an alcohol-impaired driver. On average, more than 10,000 people were killed each year from 2015 to 2019, and one person was killed in a drunk-driving crash every 52 minutes in 2019. This is why Greene County Public Health's Safe Communities Coalition and local law enforcement are working together with NHTSA to remind drivers that drunk driving is not only illegal, it is a matter of life and death. As you head out to the Labor Day festivities, remember: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*.

"We want our community members to understand that it's our first priority to keep people safe, so we're asking everyone to plan ahead if they know they'll be out drinking," said Jillian Drew, Coordinator for Greene County Safe Communities. "We need commitment from our community members that they'll keep the streets free of drunk drivers so that everyone can have a safe holiday. This is a campaign to get the message out that drunk driving is illegal, and it takes lives. Let's make this a partnership between law enforcement and drivers: Help us protect the community and put an end to this senseless behavior," she said.

During the 2019 Labor Day holiday period (6 p.m. August 30 – 5:59 a.m. September 3), there were 451 crash fatalities nationwide. Forty-five percent of those fatalities involved drivers who had been drinking (.01+ BAC). More than one-third (38%) of the fatalities involved drivers who were drunk (.08+ BAC), and nearly one-fourth (24%) involved drivers who were driving with a BAC almost twice the legal limit (.15+ BAC). Age is a particularly risky factor: Among drivers between the ages of 18 and 34 who were killed in crashes over the Labor Day holiday period in 2019, 46% of those drivers were drunk, with BACs of .08 or higher.

Greene County Public Health's Safe Communities Coalition, local law enforcement and NHTSA are reminding citizens of the many resources available to get them home safely. "Drunk driving is not acceptable behavior, especially when there are so many safe alternatives to get you home safely," said Drew.

These safe alternatives to drinking and driving are recommended:

- Remember that it is never okay to drink and drive. Even if you've had only one alcoholic beverage, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride service to get home safely.
- If available, use Uber, a local taxi service, or Lyft to get you home.
- If you see an impaired driver on the road, contact 1-800-GRAB-DUI OR #677.
- Do you have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

For more information on impaired driving, visit <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunken-driving>.

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