



Good Life. Great Journey.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Pete Ricketts, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Drive Merry, Bright, and Sober This Holiday Season
Start the Conversation: Who’s Driving Home?**

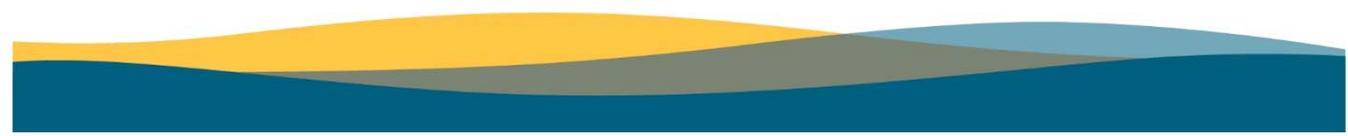
December 9, 2019 (Lincoln, Neb.) — This holiday season, the Nebraska Department of Transportation–Highway Safety Office (NDOT–HSO) is teaming up with state and local law enforcement to remind all drivers of the dangers of drinking and driving. The organizations will be working together to stress the importance of planning a sober ride home before heading out to enjoy the holiday festivities. They are encouraging drivers to start the conversation, “Who’s driving home?”

“The holidays are a special time for every community, and it’s more important than ever for us to stress the importance of safe driving habits,” said Sarpy County Sheriff, Jeff Davis. “We know everyone is rushing around, finishing those last-minute errands and attending various holiday parties. Before you ever head out to the festivities, make sure you plan a sober ride home, because driving drunk should never be an option. Help us spread the message: Even one drink can be one drink too many.”

In 2018, 33 percent of Nebraska’s fatal crashes were alcohol-involved, an increase from the 30 percent recorded in 2017. During the 2018 December holiday, 54 Nebraska law enforcement agencies participated in the Driver Sober or Get Pulled Over mobilization with 936 officers working nearly 17,000 hours of overtime. During that time, statewide check points were established to look for drunk drivers. Three hundred ninety-nine driving–while–intoxicated arrests were made and over 12,000 contacts with the public were initiated.

“Drinking and driving should never be combined. It’s essential to plan a sober ride before getting in a vehicle. Have the conversation, ‘Who’s driving home?’” stated Mark Segerstrom, Highway Safety Administrator for the NDOT–HSO. “The alternative could change your life, not to mention the lives of your passengers, of pedestrians, or of other drivers and passengers nearby. This holiday season, NDOT–HSO and Nebraska’s law enforcement urge drivers to designate a sober driver. If you plan on drinking, take responsibility and make a plan to get home.”

#MORE#



Party with a Plan

First and foremost: Plan ahead. Be honest with yourself: You know whether you will be drinking. If you plan to drink, plan for a sober driver to take you home. Is it your turn to be the designated driver? Ask your friends, "Who's driving home?" Take that role seriously.

- 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 your community's AAA "Tow to Go" Service. It is available from Friday, December 20 to 6 a.m. on Thursday, January 2, 2020.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact local law enforcement at 911 or the Nebraska State Patrol at *55.
- Have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

#NDOT#

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