



State of Illinois
Bruce Rauner, Governor



Illinois Department of Transportation
Randall S. Blankenhorn, Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
December 21, 2015

CONTACT:
Brian Williamsen 309.671.4854
Gianna Uργο 312.814.4693

IDOT, Law Enforcement: Drunk Driving Ruins the Holidays

Drunk driving fatalities remain consistent; police aim to save lives

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), Illinois State Police (ISP) and 170 police and sheriff’s departments today kicked off an all-out effort to keep drunk drivers off Illinois roads this holiday season. The end-of-year campaign comes as new National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) statistics indicate that while Illinois drunk driving fatalities are not increasing, they are not declining, either.

“This most recent data clearly shows drunk driving is still very much a problem in Illinois and the nation,” said IDOT Director of Traffic Safety, Jared Thornley. “This holiday season, don’t put yourself or others at risk because, chances are, you’ll be caught.”

In 2011, NHTSA estimates there were 278 drunk driving fatalities (motor vehicle deaths involving at least one driver with a BAC of .08 or higher) in Illinois. But in 2012 and 2013, the number increased to 322, a 15 percent increase from 2011. There was a slight decrease in 2014, with 317 drunk driving fatalities in Illinois in 2014, according to NHTSA estimates. As recently as 2007, there were 439 drunk driving fatalities in Illinois.

Nationally, drunk driving fatalities decreased just one percent, from 10,076 in 2013 to 9,967 in 2014. The statistics for 2015 will be available in late 2016. Click [here](#) for a year-by-year breakdown for Illinois and nationally.

This month, Gov. Bruce Rauner has issued a proclamation declaring December as Impaired Driving Prevention Month in Illinois, asking motorists to do their part to make our roads safer by not driving under the influence.

This year’s holiday enforcement campaign features the familiar “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” and “Click It or Ticket” messages and will include stepped-up DUI and seat belt law enforcement efforts. Through the first weekend of 2016, Illinois motorists will see this life-saving effort in their communities and throughout the state. Law enforcement will be increasing enforcement efforts, conducting roadside safety checks and safety belt enforcement zones.

“Driving under the influence remains a significant factor in fatal traffic crashes,” said Illinois State Police Colonel Tad Williams. “The ISP will be doing our part to help keep the roadways

safe this holiday season by conducting extra patrols with an emphasis on removing impaired drivers. You can do your part by planning ahead to designate a driver or arrange for other responsible transportation methods. Voluntary compliance with safe driving laws is the goal for the ISP. Help make this a better holiday for everyone. Remember, Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.”

Data compiled by IDOT shows seven people died in six fatal crashes last year during the extended Christmas weekend (crashes from 6 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 24, to 11:59 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 28.) Two of those seven individuals lost their lives in crashes involving a driver who had been drinking. 594 people were injured in crashes during the same time frame in 2014.

The Illinois “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” and “Click It or Ticket” programs are administered by IDOT and supported by the Illinois State Police and local law enforcement.