

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 31, 2014

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IDOT Reminds Drivers to Stay Sober, Celebrate Safely this Super Bowl Sunday

Illinois State Police and Local Law Enforcement Step Up Enforcement to Arrest Drunk Drivers This Weekend

SPRINGFIELD - The Super Bowl is one of America's most highly anticipated sports events, when friends and family gather in homes, bars and restaurants to enjoy the game and camaraderie. As Super Bowl Sunday approaches this weekend and football fans everywhere prepare for the game, the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Illinois State Police and dozens of local police departments across Illinois will join forces to spread two life-saving messages - Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk and Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.

As part the Super Bowl effort, IDOT is passing along safety tips for partygoers and party hosts alike and is administering a federally funded grant effort that will help the Illinois State Police and local law enforcement step up weekend patrols to combat drunk driving and encourage seat belt use.

The Illinois State Police and 55 local police departments and sheriff's offices will be out in force with more than \$150,000 in federal highway safety funds committed to additional drunk driving and seat belt enforcement. A combined total of some 300 roadside safety checks, seat belt enforcement zones and other enforcement details will take place this weekend as part of the effort.

"Whether attending the game, watching at a bar or hosting a party, IDOT reminds everyone that Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk", said Illinois Transportation Secretary Ann L. Schneider. "Designate your driver before the party starts and pass them your keys. If you don't, law enforcement has another message – Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over."

In Illinois, during the last five years (2009-2013), 17 motor vehicle fatalities have occurred on Super Bowl Sunday. Nine of those fatalities, more than half, involved a drinking driver. Last year in Illinois, seven people lost their lives in motor vehicle crashes on Super Bowl Sunday and two of those deaths involved a driver who had been drinking.

IDOT suggests the following tips for a safe Super Bowl Sunday.

If you're attending a Super Bowl party or watching the game at a sports bar or restaurant:

- Designate your sober driver before the party begins.
- Avoid drinking too much alcohol too fast. Pace yourself. Eat plenty of food, take breaks, and alternate with non-alcoholic drinks.
- Keep track of how much you have had to drink
- Make sure your ride is sober before letting him/her drive you.
- If you don't have a designated driver, ask a sober friend for a ride home; call a cab, friend, or family member to come get you; or, if possible, stay where you are for the night and don't drive until you are sober.
- Use your community's sober ride program, if available.
- Never let a friend drive drunk. Arrange a safe way for them to get home.
- Always buckle up and drive defensively. It's still your best protection against drunk drivers.
- If you're hosting a Super Bowl party:
- Make sure all of your guests designate their sober drivers in advance, or help arrange ride-sharing with sober drivers.
- Serve plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages at the party.
- If you plan to stay sober, offer to drive guests home.
- Encourage guests to pace themselves.

- Host your party like they do at the stadium. Stop serving alcohol at the end of the third quarter of the game. The fourth quarter is perfect for serving coffee and dessert.
- Keep the phone numbers of local cab companies on hand and take the keys away from anyone who is thinking of driving drunk.
- Remember, you can be held liable and prosecuted if someone you served ends up in a drunk-driving crash.
- If an underage person drinks and drives, the parent or provider may be legally liable for any damage, injury or death caused by the underage driver.
- Likewise, parents or other adults who provide alcohol to – or host a party where alcohol is available to – those under age 21, could face jail time.

The Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over Super Bowl Crackdown is funded with federal traffic safety dollars and administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation. For more information on IDOT's traffic safety programs, go to <http://trafficsafety.illinois.gov>.