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# Winnebago County Sheriff's Department



## News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
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### **Drive merry, bright and sober this holiday season** *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over, Drive High Get a DUI*

**Winnebago County, IL** - The holidays are a time for caring and sharing, which is why Winnebago County Sheriff's Office is partnering with the Illinois Department of Transportation to spread the word about the dangers of impaired driving with a "Driver Sober or Get Pulled Over" and "Drive High. Get a DUI." enforcement campaign. From Dec. 15 through Jan. 2, law enforcement across Illinois will show zero tolerance for alcohol- and drug-impaired driving to keep our roads safe and help ensure a happy holiday season.

"If you'll be celebrating with festive drinks or other impairing substances, make a plan for a safe ride home before you leave for the party," said Sheriff Gary Caruana. "Driving impaired is simply unacceptable. That's why we make zero exceptions and arrest all impaired drivers. There are no excuses."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, in the United States in 2021, a total of 13,384 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes involving an alcohol-impaired driver. On average, more than 10,000 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes each year from 2017 to 2021, with one person killed in a drunk-driving crash approximately every 45 minutes. These fatalities are preventable, and drivers must remember that driving impaired — by alcohol, cannabis or any other substance, whether legal or not — is potentially deadly and illegal behavior.

Winnebago County Sheriff's Office recommends these safe alternatives to drinking and driving:

- Designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride-sharing service, call an Uber or Lyft
- If you see an impaired driver on the road, pull over and contact Winnebago County Sheriff's Office non-emergency at 815-282-2600.
- Have a friend who is about to drive impaired? Take their keys and make arrangements to get them home safely. They'll thank you later.
- Remember to buckle up!

The holiday enforcement campaign is administered by IDOT with federal highway safety funds managed by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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