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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Drive merry, bright and sober this holiday season

Rockford, Illinois — With the holidays in full swing, Winnebago County Sheriff's Office is partnering with the Illinois Department of Transportation to remind motorists about the dangers of impaired driving. From Dec. 16 through Jan. 2, law enforcement across Illinois will step up enforcement efforts with a high visibility "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" and "Drive High. Get a DUI." traffic safety campaign.

"We want everyone in our communities to enjoy the holidays without worrying about the dangers of impaired drivers," said Sheriff Gary Caruana. "During the campaign, you can expect to see extra safety patrols. We will show zero tolerance for alcohol- and drug-impaired driving to help ensure everyone makes it to and from their holiday festivities safely."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System, in 2020, a total of 11,654 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes involving an alcohol-impaired driver. On average, more than 10,000 people were killed each year from 2016 to 2020, with one person killed in an alcohol-related crash every 45 minutes in 2020.

Before the holiday fun begins, make a plan for a sober ride home and remember these tips.

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

The holiday enforcement campaign is administered by IDOT with federal highway safety funds managed by NHTSA.

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