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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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This St. Patrick's Day, a designated driver is your lucky charm

Rockford, IL – As we head into St. Patrick's Day weekend, the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department is reminding motorists that they will be out in full force to keep our roads safe while the green beer flows.

"This St. Patrick's Day, make your own luck by designating a sober driver," said Sheriff Gary Caruana. "If you'll be drinking, using cannabis or partaking of any other impairing substance, planning ahead is the best way to ensure you and your friends make it home safely."

In addition to looking for alcohol- and drug-impaired drivers, the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department will be stepping up seat-belt enforcement, particularly at night when seat-belt usage rates are lowest. Speeding, distracted driving and other traffic laws will also be strictly enforced.

The campaign runs March 11-18.

While designating a sober driver is the simplest way to avoid a tragic crash or DUI arrest, here are some additional tips to help you keep yourself and others safe:

- If a friend is about to drive impaired, take their keys and help them get home safely.
- Buckle up. It's your best defense in the event of a crash.
- Remember, pedestrians are at risk, too. If you're walking, keep an eye out for cars. If you're driving, remain alert for impaired walkers who may not obey street signs.

The St. Patrick's Day enforcement effort is made possible by federal traffic safety funds administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation.

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