



MEDIA RELEASE

Criminal Justice Services

Ohio Criminal Justice Services • Karhlton F. Moore, Executive Director
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 14, 2011

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ODPS REMINDS MOTORISTS TO PLAN AHEAD FOR HOLIDAY SEASON

Designating a sober driver is the best holiday gift this year

COLUMBUS – As we begin the final countdown to Christmas, while people are scrambling to finish shopping and check off their holiday to-do lists, the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) and its Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) is reminding motorists of one more checklist item: a designated driver.

Without a designated driver, the holidays can turn tragic all too quickly. The holiday season can be one of the most dangerous times of the year due to an increase in impaired driving. Last year in Ohio, 39 people died in alcohol-related crashes between Thanksgiving and New Year's.

"It is critical that motorists plan ahead, make responsible decisions and buckle up so we can make this a happy and safe holiday season," said OCJS Executive Director Karhlton Moore. "Saving lives on our roads is a top priority and we, along with our partners, are committed to doing just that."

ODPS and its safety partners across the state expect a large number of people to be traveling to and from holiday parties between now and the end of the year. As part of a national holiday enforcement blitz, OCJS is assisting law enforcement around the state, including OVI task forces, in coordinating efforts to step up enforcement of traffic and impaired driving laws.

In addition to the more than 79 local law enforcement agencies stepping up enforcement efforts through sobriety checkpoints and roving patrols, the Ohio State Highway Patrol will also have a visible presence on the state's highways.

Designating a sober driver and not letting friends drive drunk are just two simple steps to help avoid a tragic crash or an arrest for impaired driving. All drivers and occupants are also encouraged to buckle up every trip, every time because a seat belt is the best defense against a drunk driver.

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ODPS works to reduce deaths and injuries on Ohio's roads through the coordinated efforts of all of its Divisions. The Ohio Investigative Unit enforces liquor, tobacco and food stamp laws in liquor permit premises and the Ohio State Highway Patrol enforces traffic laws. OCJS funds the efforts of OVI and Drug Task Forces and other grants for law enforcement to combat impaired and unsafe driving and increase seat belt use while also promoting educational programs, coalition-building and campaigns focused on highway safety.