



LOUISIANA HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE

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"We owe it to families to work harder to prevent more deaths" ***Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over***

Aug. 19, 2026 – Nearly half of the motor vehicle crash fatalities during the Labor Day holiday over the last five years were the result of someone drinking and driving, the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission announced.

To combat impaired driving, LHSC is sponsoring Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over, a campaign through Labor Day to identify, stop and arrest drivers who are under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Law enforcement agencies around Louisiana will have extra patrols on the road that are dedicated to stopping impaired drivers and taking them off the road.

"We owe it to the families of the victims of impaired driving crashes to work harder to prevent more fatalities," LHSC Executive Director Lisa Freeman said.

During the Labor Day holiday over the five-year period of 2020–2024, there were 18 fatalities and 271 injuries in motor vehicle crashes that involved a driver who had been drinking, according to data from the Center for Analytics and Research in Transportation Safety at LSU.

Labor Day is the holiday that traditionally marks the end of the summer season, and it is usually one of the busiest traffic holidays of the year. During such high-traffic holidays, LHSC makes federal safety funds available to local law enforcement agencies to fund the extra patrols, Freeman said.

"The mission of law enforcement, in this campaign, is to protect the public, not to write tickets or arrest people," Freeman said. "But taking impaired drivers off the street is a tactic that law enforcement uses to protect the public. Every arrest is potentially one less impaired driver who could seriously injure or kill innocent people."

Freeman also reminded drivers that any substance – even legally prescribed drugs – that changes a person's coordination, vision, reactions or judgment is considered an impairing substance.

"When you see that warning on the pill bottle about not operating heavy machinery, that means you shouldn't be driving a vehicle," Freeman said. "Having a prescription to an impairing substance does not make you immune from impaired driving laws."

Louisiana law says anyone who operates a motor vehicle and has a blood-alcohol content of .08 or above is considered intoxicated. Freeman said the standard for safe driving is not to drink any alcohol.

“People often ask, ‘How many drinks can I safely consume before being legally drunk?’” she said. “The answer is always the same: zero. Once alcohol enters your system, you react slower, your vision is less sharp, and your judgment is compromised. Your best option is not to drink or find a sober driver.”

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