



## **LOUISIANA HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE**

**March 12, 2021**

### **Don't rely on luck this St. Patrick's Day**

St. Patrick's Day may evoke the luck of the Irish, but a designated driver beats a four-leaf clover if you've been drinking.

"Everyone is Irish on March 17, but getting a designated driver is better than finding that pot of gold," said Lisa Freeman, executive director of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission. "No matter what the calendar says, drinking and driving never mix. Designating a sober driver before the celebration begins can prevent a tragedy when the party is over."

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the St. Patrick's Day holiday is one of the deadliest times on the nation's roadways. From 2015 to 2019, 280 people were killed on U.S. roads in drunk-driving crashes during the St. Patrick's Day holiday period.

Simply walking home instead of driving if you're impaired can be just as dangerous. In Louisiana, 46 pedestrians who were killed had been drinking, according to 2019 statistics from the Center for Analytics and Research in Transportation Safety at LSU.

Here are some tips for a safe St. Patrick's Day gathering:

- Designate a sober driver before you start drinking.
- If you are hosting a party, have plenty of non-alcoholic beverages and snacks available.
- If you don't plan on drinking, help someone by volunteering to be a designated driver.
- If you see someone has been drinking and doesn't have a designated driver, offer to find someone to drive or walk the guest home.
- Drugs, even prescription drugs, can affect your judgment, alertness and reactions. Know how medications affect you before you get behind the wheel.

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