



LOUISIANA HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE

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Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over: You can't do the Mardi Gras Mambo in handcuffs

As another Carnival season rolls on, the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission reminds all drivers that it's hard to do the Mardi Gras Mambo when your hands are cuffed behind your back during the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign.

Law enforcement officers across the state will be looking for impaired drivers through Mardi Gras, February 17. Drivers who are impaired will be pulled over and arrested, LHSC Executive Director Lisa Freeman said.

"If a driver's ability to operate a motor vehicle has been compromised, our law enforcement partners will protect the public by getting that driver off the road," she said.

During the 2024 Carnival season, five people were killed and 73 were injured in crashes that involved alcohol, according to the latest statistics from the Center for Analytics and Research in Transportation Safety at LSU. From 2020-2024, alcohol-related crashes killed 32 people and injured 372 on Louisiana roads during Carnival season.

More than one-third of all fatal crashes in Louisiana involved an alcohol-impaired driver in 2024, the statistics show. In 2024, impaired drivers were involved in 243 fatal crashes.

Impaired driving is not limited to alcohol usage, Freeman said. If a driver's reflexes, vision, judgment, or coordination have been affected by any substance, that driver will be arrested.

"Impaired is impaired. Whether it's beer, wine, barbiturates, opioids or even over-the-counter cough syrup, the consequences are the same," Freeman said. "Law enforcement officers will aggressively protect the public from impaired drivers and the wreckage they cause."

During the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over statewide campaign, federal grant funds are provided through LHSC to law enforcement agencies. Those funds are used to pay overtime to officers and deputies to patrol and specifically, find impaired drivers.

"We celebrate Carnival, not only in New Orleans but throughout the state, from Alexandria, Shreveport and Monroe, to Houma, Baton Rouge, the westbank, and the northshore," Freeman said. "Because of the volume of people on the roads, LHSC operates a special Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign during Mardi Gras. While you, your family and friends are enjoying the parades, we're working to keep the roads safe."

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