



## LOUISIANA HIGHWAY SAFETY COMMISSION NEWS RELEASE

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### ***Most Louisiana Labor Day fatalities involve alcohol*** **Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over is “simple math” that saves lives**

Law enforcement agencies across Louisiana are cracking down on impaired driving this Labor Day holiday, which historically has seen a high number of injuries and fatalities involving drivers who had been drinking.

The Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign, which runs through September 6, puts extra law enforcement officers on the road to look for impaired drivers. Those who are caught will be arrested, said Lisa Freeman, executive director of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission.

“Since 2015, most of the people killed in crashes during the Labor Day holiday were in a wreck that involved a driver who had been drinking,” Freeman said. “It’s simple math. Fewer impaired drivers on the road equals safer roads plus more lives saved.”

From 2015 to 2019, 27 of the 46 people killed in crashes on Louisiana highways during the Labor Day holiday were in an alcohol-related crash. In 2019, six of the eight people who died in a Labor Day crash in Louisiana were in an alcohol-related crash, according to data from the Center for Analytics and Research in Transportation Safety at LSU.

“Nationally, about 45 percent of Labor Day fatalities in 2019 involved a driver who had been drinking,” Freeman said. “In Louisiana, it was 75 percent. We still have a lot of work to do to convince our citizens that impaired driving is not acceptable behavior. Our law enforcement partners are making an extra effort from now through Labor Day to keep our roads safe.”

During the 2019 Labor Day holiday in Louisiana, 81 people were injured in 56 crashes that involved a driver who had been drinking. Since 2015, 416 people in Louisiana have been injured in alcohol-related crashes during the Labor Day holiday.

Although much of the focus of Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over is on alcohol, Freeman pointed out that “impairment” is not only caused by alcohol.

“A driver who takes any substance that alters their reflexes, judgment, coordination or concentration is considered to be impaired,” Freeman said. “Whether you call it being drunk, buzzed, high, or stoned, it’s all treated the same during the Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over campaign. If you drive impaired, you will pay the consequences.”

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