



MEDIA RELEASE

Traffic Safety Office

Ohio Traffic Safety Office • Tina O'Grady, Administrator
www.ohiohighwaysafetyoffice.ohio.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 3, 2010

Contact: Kristen Castle, Public Information Officer 614-728-4623

Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk *Make the right play to save your life and others*

(COLUMBUS) - As you make your Super Bowl plans, the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) want to remind you that "Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk." Be sure to designate a sober driver if you plan to drink alcohol on Super Bowl Sunday.

Super Bowl Sunday is one of America's biggest and most entertaining national sporting events as friends and families gather to socialize and watch the big game. Yet, it has also become one of the Nation's most dangerous days on the roadways due to impaired driving. According to research by NHTSA, in 2008, fatalities in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes accounted for 32 percent of all motor vehicle traffic fatalities. On Super Bowl Sunday (Feb. 3 to 5:59 a.m. Feb. 4), 49 percent of the fatalities occurred in crashes where a driver or motorcycle rider had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) level of .08 or higher.

"We want to pass our safety message to everyone who will be drinking this weekend, real *Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk*," said ODPS Director Cathy Collins-Taylor. "Please act responsibly, designate a sober driver before the Super Bowl party begins and make sure other Fans do the same."

During last year's Super Bowl, the Ohio State Highway Patrol made 60 OVI-related arrests Feb. 1, 2009, at 6 a.m. through Feb. 2, 2009 at 6 a.m. During this 24-hour reporting period, four people lost their lives on Ohio's roadways, with one being OVI-related. In addition, 144 motorists were injured, with 19 being OVI-related.

Getting caught driving while impaired will earn you a costly penalty from law enforcement and may even result in a turnover of your driving privileges. For bars and establishments, over-serving or serving underage could also mean costly fines, suspension or revocation of their liquor permit.

-more-

Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk
February 3, 2010
Page Two

To help keep the roads safe this Super Bowl weekend, more than 88 local law enforcement agencies around the state will be conducting more than 1,800 hours of enforcement activity and 900 hours of saturation patrols in addition to sobriety checkpoints, funded by federal grants provided through OTSO. The Ohio State Highway Patrol will have a visible presence on the state's highways and Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) agents will be doing compliance checks in permit establishments as well as working with local law enforcement.

Designating a sober driver should be on the top of everyone's Super Bowl party list along with these tips to stay safe:

If you are hosting a Super Bowl party:

- Remember, you can be held liable and prosecuted if someone you served ends up in an impaired-driving crash.
- Make sure all of your guests designate their sober drivers in advance, or help arrange ride-sharing with other sober drivers.
- Serve lots of food and include lots of non-alcoholic beverages at the party.
- Stop serving alcohol at the end of the third quarter of the game and begin serving coffee and dessert.
- Keep the numbers for local cab companies handy, and take the keys away from anyone who is thinking of driving while impaired.

If you are attending a Super Bowl party or watching at a sports bar or restaurant:

- Designate your sober driver before the party begins and leave your car keys at home.
- Avoid drinking too much alcohol too fast. Pace yourself—eat enough food, take breaks, and alternate with non-alcoholic drinks.
- If you don't have a designated driver, ask a sober friend for a ride home; call a cab, friend, or family member to come and get you; or just stay where you are and sleep it off until you are sober.
- Use your community's Sober Rides program.
- Never let a friend get behind the wheel of their vehicle if you think they are about to drive while impaired. Remember, *Fans Don't Let Fans Drive Drunk*.
- Always buckle up – it's still your best defense against other impaired drivers.

###

ODPS works to reduce alcohol related deaths and injuries and keep Ohio's roads safe through the enforcement efforts of the Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) which enforces liquor, tobacco and food stamp laws in liquor permit premises and the Ohio State Highway Patrol which enforces traffic laws on the road. In addition to enforcement efforts, OIU also works to educate bar owners and servers about liquor laws, including over-serving. The Ohio Traffic Safety Office (OTSO) coordinates and funds the efforts of DUI Task Forces and grants for local law enforcement and safety partners to combat impaired and unsafe driving. OTSO also promotes educational programs, coalition-building efforts and campaigns focused on highway safety.