

2015 CRACKDOWN



2015 DRIVE SOBER OR GET PULLED OVER NEWS RELEASE

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High Springs Police Department Will Be Out in Full Force to Catch Drunk Drivers *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*

As summer winds down, the High Springs Police Department is ramping up its enforcement efforts as part of a national crackdown on drunk driving. The 20-day, high-visibility campaign, *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*, is a partnership with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to curb impaired driving and save lives. August 21-September 7 (Labor Day), law enforcement partners nationwide will show zero tolerance for drunk driving. Increased state and national messaging about the dangers of driving drunk, coupled with checkpoints and increased officers on the road, aim to drastically reduce the toll of drunk driving.

And what a toll it is. In 2013, there were 10,076 people killed in drunk-driving crashes, almost a third of all traffic fatalities. Thirty-eight percent of crash fatalities on Labor Day weekend that year involved drunk drivers (with blood alcohol concentrations [BACs] of .08 or higher), amounting to 161 lives lost. And we're not just talking about a little bit of alcohol, either. More than a quarter (27%) of the crash fatalities that occurred on Labor Day weekend involved drivers with BACs of .15 or higher—almost twice the illegal per se limit.

"Too many people think their actions don't affect anybody else," said Chief Anterio. *"They know it's illegal. They know it's wrong. But they do it anyway – they make decisions as if those statistics just can't happen to them,"* he added.

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The reality is, people aren't invincible. Of the 10,076 people who were killed in impaired-driving crashes in 2013, 65 percent were the drunk drivers themselves. Those 6,515 drunk drivers planned on making it to their destinations, but they didn't.

In every state, it's illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 or higher. Chief Anterio wants to remind drivers that it's not a recommendation; it's the law. And during the enforcement period starting August 21, there will be a special emphasis on drunk-driving enforcement. Drivers should expect to see more patrol vehicles, DUI checkpoints, and increased messaging about this reckless, preventable crime. *"The number of people who are still drinking and driving is unacceptable,"* added Chief Anterio. *"Yes, we want to increase awareness for the campaign, but we want the effects to be permanent."*

NHTSA data shows that repeat offenders are an especially dangerous facet of the drunk-driving problem. In the month of August from 2009-2013, of the drunk drivers involved in fatal crashes, almost 1 out of 10 (8%) of them had already been convicted of at least one drunk-driving offense.

Chief Anterio emphasized the preventable nature of drunk driving: *"All it takes is a little planning ahead. Designate a sober driver or call a cab. But whatever you do, don't drink and drive."* NHTSA has made it even easier to get home safely when you've been drinking. The new SaferRide mobile app (free from the iTunes store and Google Play), can help users call a taxi or a friend for a ride home. The app can even help you identify your location so you can be picked up. So this August and year-round, remember that there's no excuse for drunk driving. If you choose to break the law, the High Springs Police Department will see you before you see them. *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.*

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