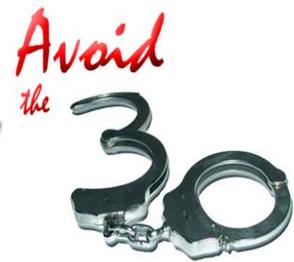




Avoid the 30 Riverside County PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 14, 2013

CONTACT:
Sergeant Skip Showalter
Riverside Police Department
Phone: 951.351.6046
Email: sshowalter@riversideca.gov

Heavy Police Presence This St. Patrick's Day to Catch Drunk Drivers Throughout Riverside County

Riverside, CA— As St. Patrick's Day approaches, the Avoid the 30 DUI Task Force is urging motorists to plan a safe ride home and never get behind the wheel drunk or drugged. During this holiday weekend, police officers, sheriff deputies and the CHP throughout Riverside County will be on high alert, cracking down on impaired drivers as part of its *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* public safety campaign.

"Drunk driving is dangerous, deadly, against the law – and it will not be tolerated in communities this St. Patrick's Day," said Avoid the 30 DUI Task Force coordinator Sergeant Skip Showalter. "Today we are giving fair warning to everyone traveling in Riverside County that all law enforcement officers will be out on patrol. If you are caught driving drunk, you will be arrested. Plan ahead! If you plan to drink, don't drive."

The Avoid the 30 DUI Task Force will be deploying special roving DUI patrols in the cities of Blythe, Corona, Menifee, Palm Springs, Riverside and San Jacinto, looking to stop and arrest drivers who are impaired by alcohol or drugs. In addition, checkpoints are planned in the cities of Menifee, Palm Springs and Riverside. These DUI patrols and checkpoints are, in addition to regularly scheduled patrol officers, all looking for the tell-tale signs of an impaired driver behind the wheel.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that over 700 people were killed nationwide in crashes involving drunk drivers during St. Patrick's Day holidays from 2006 to 2010. On average, every 51 minutes a person is killed in a drunk-driving crash in the United States and the majority of these crashes involve drivers who have a .15% BAC or higher, almost twice legal limit of .08%.

"Whether you are gathering with friends at the pub or attending your local events, if alcohol is part of the festivities, don't rely on luck to get you home. Designate a sober driver to get you there and back safely, or contact your local sober ride program for a ride home," said Sergeant Showalter.

The Avoid the 30 DUI Task Force recommends the following easy steps to have a safe and happy St. Patrick's Day:

- Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin.
- Before drinking, designate a sober driver and leave your car keys at home.
- If you're impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation to get home safely.
- Use your community's sober ride program.
- Report Drunk Drivers - Call 911.
- And remember, if you know someone who is about to drive a car or ride a motorcycle while impaired, take the keys and help that person make other arrangements to get to where he or she is going safely.

Funding for Avoid the 30 operations is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Media Notes: To schedule an interview regarding anti-drunk driving efforts, or to request a ride-along with law enforcement, please contact Sergeant Skip Showalter at 951.351.6046 or via email at sshowalter@riversideca.gov

