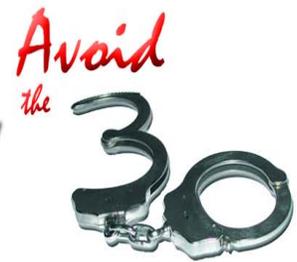


Avoid the 30 Riverside County PRESS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Play It Safe This Cinco de Mayo! Riverside County Avoid the 30 DUI Task Force Working to Reduce Drunk Driving Crashes and Fatalities

Riverside, CA—As party-goers celebrate Cinco de Mayo with mariachi music and authentic cuisine, many will also indulge with their favorite margarita or tequila. Unfortunately, some will also choose to get behind the wheel after consuming alcohol. That's why this year the Riverside County Avoid the 30 DUI Task Force is joining with agencies throughout California and across the nation to encourage everyone to plan ahead this Cinco de Mayo and to never drink and drive.

"You should always designate a sober driver before the party begins," said Riverside Police Chief Sergio Diaz. "But, if you don't plan ahead, and you've been drinking, do not get behind the wheel. There are plenty of other alternatives that will keep you and others safe and out of trouble."

Special DUI saturations patrols will be deployed this weekend in Beaumont, Coachella, Desert Hot Springs, Hemet, Perris, Palm Springs and Riverside looking to identify and stop suspected drunk drivers. Additionally, every routine traffic and patrol officer assigned to duty will be on heightened alert to prevent another senseless tragedy.

From 2007 to 2011, 38 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities that occurred each year around May 5th involved impaired drivers or motorcycle operators with blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) of .08 and above, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

During the 2011 Cinco de Mayo holiday, 35 percent of the nation's motor vehicle fatalities involved an alcohol-impaired driver or motorcycle operator with a BAC of .08 and above. A disturbing 80 percent of the alcohol-impaired fatalities involved a driver or motorcycle operator with nearly twice the legal limit, showing a BAC of .15.

Death or injuries are not the only consequences from impaired driving. When caught and arrested, violators often face jail time, loss of their driver's license and it could cost up to \$10,000 in fees, fines, and higher insurance rates.

Party-goers should call a friend or cab, use public transportation, or use your local sober ride program.

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 who reminds you – 'Report Drunk Drivers, Call 911!'

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

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