



# Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office



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## News Release

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### Drunk Driving Ruins the Holidays

#### *Police Aim to Save Lives with 'Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over' Crackdown*

**Goleta, CA** - If you're enjoying the holidays with a drink, the Goleta Police Department has a message for you: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*. Due to the increase in impaired-driving related fatalities around the holidays each year, law enforcement agencies across America will be actively searching for and arresting impaired-drivers from December 18 to January 3.

As part of the national *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* enforcement campaign period; police, sheriff, and the CHP throughout the Santa Barbara County will be deploying DUI Checkpoints and DUI Saturation Patrols during this 17 day DUI Enforcement Campaign.

The Police Departments for Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, Lompoc and Goleta will be conducting a DUI/driver's license checkpoint tonight from 6 p.m. until 3 a.m. at an undisclosed location within their respective city limits.

There are 10,000 reasons to crackdown: in 2013, 10,076 people were killed in crashes involving a drunk driver. In December 2013 alone there were 733 people killed in crashes involving at least one driver or motorcycle operator with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher. Twenty-three of those deaths occurred on Christmas Day. In California, there were 98 deaths and another 1,852 injured in alcohol involved collisions in December 2013.

"It's time for all drivers to get the message," said Jeff Farmer, Senior Deputy of the Goleta Traffic Unit. "Impaired-driving is a choice you make, and when you make that choice, people get hurt or die. That's why we're joining law enforcement nationwide to share the message: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*. The safest way to get home," Farmer said, "is to drive sober or catch a ride with a sober designated driver."

Recent statistics reveal that 30 percent of drivers in fatal crashes had one or more drugs in their systems. A study of active drivers showed more tested positive for drugs that may impair driving (14 percent) than did for alcohol (7.3 percent). Of the drugs, marijuana was most prevalent, at 7.4 percent, slightly more than alcohol. Everyone should be mindful that if you're taking medication – whether prescription or over-the-counter – drinking even small amounts of alcohol can greatly intensify the impairment affects.

Law Enforcement emphasizes the preventable nature of impaired-driving, reminding everyone that all it takes is a little planning by designating a sober driver or calling a cab. Whatever you do, don't drink and drive. The California Office of Traffic Safety DDVIP (Designated Driver VIP) mobile app is now available for free download on iOS and Android devices. Launched last year, the new DDVIP app offers enhanced features, allowing users to "Map a Spot" with their current location to find DDVIP partnering establishments in their area or a "List of Spots" to search all participating bars and restaurants throughout California. Users will be offered free incentives at each bar to appreciate their life saving role. They can stay up-to-date with the latest from DDVIP and see what other users are saying via its social tab. Also through the app, for those who want to consume alcohol but also make it a point to plan ahead, users can easily order a sober ride from Uber, Lyft, or Curb – all from one screen.

Goleta PD reminds everyone to follow these simple tips to stay safe:

- Plan a safe way to get home ***before*** you attend the party. Alcohol and drugs impair judgment, as well as reaction time. If you're impaired you're more likely to choose to drive impaired.
- Designate a sober driver; take public transportation, a car service, or call a sober friend or family member to get home.
- Walking while impaired can be just as dangerous as impaired-driving. Designate a sober friend to walk you home.
- If you see someone you think is about to drive while impaired, take their keys and help them get home safely.

If you're caught driving impaired you could face jail time, fines, loss of driver's license, towing fees, and other DUI expenses totaling \$10,000 on average. That's not a small price, and that doesn't even count the heftier price you could pay: the price of your life or someone else's.

In addition to reminding all drivers to drive sober, Senior Deputy Farmer is calling on everyone to be alert and 'Report Drunk Drivers – Call 911! If you see a dangerous driver call immediately! If someone you know is about to drive after drinking, take their keys and help them get home safely. "We've got to work together to make our roads safer this December and year-round," he said.

Remember, driving after drinking should never be an option. *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.*

Funding for this holiday campaign is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

**The City of Goleta contracts with the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office for police services.**



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