



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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FOR MORE INFORMATION
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December is Impaired Driving Awareness Month

Travel spikes during the holidays but so does impaired driving

(Dixon, IL)

During the holidays, traditionally, there are celebrations with family and friends, with coworkers, and other activities. As a result, travel increases accordingly on America's roadways. Unfortunately, traffic related deaths also increase between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.

That's why the month of December has been designated National Impaired Driving Prevention Awareness Month

- **Each year around 12,000 people are killed in alcohol-impaired driving crashes**, nearly 33% of all traffic-related deaths in the United States. (NHTSA).
- **Even a small amount of alcohol can affect driving ability.** In 2021, around 2,200 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes where a driver had a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of .01 to .07. The legal threshold for BAC in Illinois is .08.
- Car crashes are a **leading cause of death for teens**, and about **25% of fatal crashes involve an underage impaired driver.** (NHTSA)
- **Drugs** other than alcohol **are the main factor in about 15% of motor vehicle deaths** each year. Often, drugs, mixed with alcohol, are the main factor.
- **Marijuana users were about 25% more likely to be involved in a crash** than drivers with no evidence of marijuana use. Marijuana is the second most often found substance in drivers involved in crashes.
- Keep in mind **medications, fatigue, and stress can also contribute to driving impairment**, especially in combination with alcohol or other drugs.

What can you do? "Do what you can to prevent those who are impaired from driving," says Stacie Kemp, Sinnissippi Centers Interim President/CEO. "If you find that a friend is impaired, and if you are in the situation where you can take their keys or offer them a ride, get them a cab or another ride share service, or obtain some other ride, try to do that. Do anything you can to keep them from driving," adds Kemp. "We generally don't like confrontations, but the most important thing in an impaired driving situation is that the people we care about make it home safely," says Kemp.

"If you find yourself being impaired, do the same," says Kemp. "Give your keys to a friend or loved one, whoever is with you, who is not impaired and can drive you, call a cab, get a ride, or make other arrangements."

"The best way to stay safe is to not be impaired in the first place," adds Kemp. "So, if there is any chance you will be driving, develop and use a plan to get home safe and sound. If you think you might become impaired, then plan to rent a hotel room if you're farther away from home, arrange a ride, whatever makes the most sense in your situation," says Kemp. "Being safe so you can spend your holiday with your family and friends is the best gift you can give this holiday season."

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