

Delaware General Health District

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A Safe Communities Grantee of the Ohio Department of Public Safety

NEWS RELEASE

STAY SAFE WITH A SOBER DRIVER TO CELEBRATE ST. PATRICK'S DAY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DELAWARE, Oh., Feb. 25, 2010 – For many Americans, St. Patrick's Day has become a popular night out to celebrate with friends and family. Unfortunately, due to the large number of drunk drivers, the night out has also become very dangerous.

On St. Patrick's Day 2008, 37 percent of the drivers and motorcyclists involved in fatal crashes had a blood alcohol content (BAC) of .08 or above, according to statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Fifty motorists died in those crashes.

"Whether you are meeting a few friends at the local tavern after work or attending a pub crawl, if you plan on using alcohol, never drive while impaired—and never let your friends drive if you think they are impaired," said Jackie Bain of the Delaware General Health District's Delaware County Safe Communities program. "Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk."

The Delaware Safe Communities/Safe Kids Coalition recommends the following easy steps for a safe St. Patrick's Day, coming up on March 17:

- Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin.
- Before drinking, please 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.
 - Call **1-800-829-4222** to get a taxi if you don't know the local taxi service number.
 - If you see a drunk driver on the road, don't hesitate to contact your local law enforcement.
 - If you know someone who is about to drive or ride while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.

"Driving impaired is simply not worth the risk," Bain said. "Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for driving while impaired can be really significant. Don't depend on dumb luck this St. Patrick's Day. Designate your sober driver before the party begins."

Additional information is available at www.stopimpaireddriving.org.