# 2021 Thanksgiving *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*

### FACT SHEET & TALKING POINTS

This Thanksgiving, the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is teaming up with **[State/Local Organization]** to keep you safe on the roads. A popular trend, Thanksgiving Eve, or “Blackout Wednesday,” highlights — and even encourages — the heavy consumption of alcohol on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving. NHTSA is working hard to get the message out that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. Read the statistics below and help spread this lifesaving message.

* This Thanksgiving holiday, NHTSA and its partners are conducting a social media blitz to help deliver lifesaving messages about the dangers of drunk driving into the public conversation and encourage positive actions that can help reduce impaired driving on the roadways. We’re reminding drivers that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*, whether it’s during a holiday or any other day.
* From 2015 to 2019, 135 drivers involved in fatal crashes on Thanksgiving Eve (6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.) were alcohol-impaired, and over the entire holiday period (6 p.m. the Wednesday before Thanksgiving through 5:59 a.m. the Monday after Thanksgiving), nearly 800 people died in alcohol-impaired crashes.
* During the 2019 Thanksgiving holiday period (6 p.m. Wednesday, November 27, through 5:59 a.m. Monday, December 2), more than four times as many drivers involved in fatal crashes were alcohol-impaired during nighttime hours than during the day.
* Approximately one-third of all traffic crash fatalities in the United States involve drunk drivers (with blood alcohol concentrations [BACs] at or above .08). In 2019, there were 10,142 people killed in drunk-driving crashes.
* Nationally, it is illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 or higher, except in Utah, where the limit is .05 BAC.
* Although it’s illegal to drive when impaired by alcohol, in 2019, one person was killed every 52 minutes in a drunk-driving crash on our nation’s roads.
* Men are more likely than women to be driving drunk when involved in fatal crashes. In 2019, 21% of males were drunk, compared to 14% of females.
* Of the traffic fatalities in 2019 among children 14 and younger, 19% (204) occurred in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes.
* Among the 10,142 alcohol-impaired-driving fatalities in 2019, 68% (6,872) were in crashes in which at least one driver had a BAC of .15 or higher.
* In 2019, motorcycle riders involved in fatal crashes had higher percentages of alcohol impairment than any other type of motor vehicle driver (29% for motorcycle riders, compared to drivers of passenger cars (20%), light trucks (19%), and large trucks (2%).
* Nighttime is a particularly dangerous time to be on the roads: The rate of alcohol impairment among drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2019 was 3.3 times higher at night than during the day.

**The Cost of Drunk Driving**

* On average, a DUI can set you back $10,000 in attorney’s fees, fines, court costs, lost time at work, higher insurance rates, and more.
* The financial impact from impaired-driving crashes is devastating. Based on 2010 numbers (the most recent year for which cost data is available), impaired-driving crashes cost the United States $44 billion annually.
* If you’re caught drinking and driving, you can face jail time. Imagine trying to explain that to your friends and family or your place of employment.
* Drinking and driving can cause you to lose your driver’s license and your vehicle. This could inhibit you from getting to work, resulting in lost wages and, potentially, job loss.

**Celebrate with a Plan**

Always remember to plan ahead if you will be celebrating. If you plan to drink, plan ahead for a sober driver to take you home. Is it your turn to be the designated driver? Take that role seriously and do not consume alcohol, not even one drink.

* Remember that it is never okay to drink and drive. Even if you’ve had only one alcoholic beverage, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride service to get home safely.
* If available, use your community’s sober ride program **[Insert your local sober ride program specifics here].**
* If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact **[Local Law Enforcement].**
* Do you have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

Always remember: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. For more information, visit [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/buzzed-driving-drunk-driving/halloween](https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/buzzed-driving-drunk-driving/halloween).