# 2024. St. Patrick’s Day *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*

### **FACT SHEET & TALKING POINTS**

This St. Patrick’s Day — Sunday, March 17, 2024 — don’t forget to wear your green to avoid getting pinched, and leave the driving to a sober driver. While there are many St. Paddy’s Day traditions to embrace and sham-rockin’ activities to partake in, it’s critical to remember that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. Because St. Paddy’s Day is one of the most popular drinking holidays, it can be a dangerous time on our nation’s roads. Review and share the following facts and tips that will help you, and others, remember that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.* This St. Patrick’s Day, and every day, plan for a sober and safe ride to and from any celebration.

* St. Patrick’s Day is one of the deadliest days on our nation’s roads. There were 272 lives lost in drunk-driving crashes during the holiday period (6:00 p.m. March 16 to 5:59 a.m. March 18) between 2017 and 2021.
* More than 13,384 preventable deaths throughout 2021 involved drunk driving, representing 31% of all traffic fatalities in the United States that year. Over the 2021 St. Patrick’s Day holiday period, specifically, 47 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes.
* Year after year, the rate of impairment among drivers involved in fatal crashes is higher at night on St. Patrick’s Day. In 2021, 41 of the 47 traffic fatalities involving an impaired driver during the holiday period occurred in the nighttime hours (6:00 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.). Still, 31 daytime fatalities in drunk-driving crashes occurred between 2017 and 2021 over the St. Patrick’s Day holiday period. It doesn’t matter if it is during the day or the night, *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*.
* Nationally, it is illegal to drive with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 g/dL or higher, except in Utah, where the limit is .05 g/dL.
* Although it’s illegal to drive when impaired by alcohol, in 2021, one person was killed every 39 minutes in a drunk-driving crash on our nation’s roads.
* The rate of alcohol impairment among drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2021 was 2.8 times higher at night than during the day.
* Males are more likely than females to be driving drunk when involved in fatal crashes. In 2021, 22% of males were drunk, compared to 17% of females.
* **[Local holiday season statistic if available.]**

**The Cost of Drunk Driving**

* Drunk driving exacts a heavy toll on our nation, and the financial impacts are devastating: Crashes in which alcohol was the cause resulted in $57 billion in economic costs.
* Drinking and driving is a risk no one should take. Doing so can cause injury or death to the driver, passengers, and others on the road. The consequences of drunk driving could be life-altering.

**Play Ahead for a Safe Celebration**

* Always drive 100% sober. Even one alcoholic beverage could be one too many.
* Make a plan: Before you have even one drink, designate a sober driver to get you home safely. If you wait until you’ve been drinking to make this decision, you might not make the best one.
* You have options to get home safely: designate a sober driver or call a taxi or rideshare. Getting home safely is always worth it. Some communities even have a sober ride program [insert local sober ride details here].
* If it’s your turn to be the designated driver, take your job seriously and don’t drink.
* If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact [Local Law Enforcement].

If you have a friend who is about to drink and drive, take the keys away and let a sober driver get your friend home safely. For more information about the *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving* campaign, visit [www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving](https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving).