

# Press Release



## You Choose: Drink OR Drive

**Apache Junction, Arizona, November 24, 2014** – December is Impaired Driving Prevention Month and as Americans prepare for festivities with family and friends, Apache Junction Police Department and Arizona Governor’s Office of Highway Safety (AzGOHS) want to remind all drivers that it’s dangerous to drive after drinking. Drunk driving has become a terrible killer on our nation’s roads. Every year, more than 10,322 people are killed by drunk drivers in America. This time of year is especially dangerous due to holiday celebrations and frequent parties. In December 2012 alone, there were 830 people killed in crashes involving at least one drunk driver or motorcycle operator. On average, a third (31%) of all crash fatalities in America involves drunk driving. You have to choose your role *before* drinking begins: will you drink or will you drive? Remember, even if you only have a little bit to drink and think you’re “okay to drive,” you could still be over the legal limit, because ***Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.***

Apache Junction Chief of Police Thomas Kelly explained the slogan: “A lot of folks think they know their own limits. They think that if they’re just a little ‘buzzed,’ then they’re still good to drive.” But according to the 42-year veteran of law enforcement this couldn’t be further from the truth. “Time and again, drivers who may have only had a couple of drinks put themselves and others at serious risk,” he added. “Driving with any alcohol in your system can be dangerous.”

In every state in the country, it’s illegal to drive with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. And for some people, it doesn’t take much to reach that level. “We really want all Apache Junction drivers to understand that you don’t have to be falling-down drunk to be too impaired to drive,” said Chief Kelly.

On November 25, 2014 the AzGOHS DUI Taskforce kicked off at the Capitol. “We continue our partnership with AzGOHS to crackdown on DUI / impaired drivers and to encourage designated drivers and planning your way home after celebrating for the Holidays.” said Sergeant Clyde Allison of the AJPD, who is heading up this year’s local DUI Task Force. “With support and funding through the AZGOHS we will be out in force during the holidays and holiday weekends to track down and arrest impaired drivers.” Saturday, November 29<sup>th</sup> AJPD teamed up with Pinal County Sherriff’s Office to triple the force in multi agency DUI enforcement. Sgt. Allison adds “Concerted efforts with all our Pinal County Task Force members will once again be enhancing the enforcement activities. On December 13<sup>th</sup>, to emphasize that this is not just holiday time enforcement, we will be dedicating additional personnel to enhance our efforts to remove all impaired drivers off our streets. Remember, **Drive Hammered, Get Nailed!**”

As part of the AzGOHS DUI Taskforce, departments all across the state will be increasing their patrol, enforcement, AND arrests of DUI drivers. So this holiday season, AJPD urges you to plan ahead: designate

a sober driver- **Get a DD, NOT a DUI!** If you plan on drinking at all, don't plan on driving. Don't just assume that you'll know whether you can safely drive or not at the end of the night.

Apache Junction drivers, please remember these tips from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to avoid a DUI and keep our roads safe:

- Even one drink can impair your judgment and reaction time and increase the risk of getting arrested for driving drunk or having a crash.
- If you will be drinking, do not plan on driving. Plan ahead; designate a sober driver before the party begins.
- When you know you'll be drinking, leave your keys at home or give them to someone else.
- If you have been drinking, do not drive—even a short distance. Call a taxi, phone a sober friend or family member, use public transportation.

Remember, it is never okay to drive after drinking. *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.*

For more information, visit [www.azgohs.gov/programs](http://www.azgohs.gov/programs) or [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov](http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov).

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