

**HOLIDAY PLANNER  
SOCIAL NORMING VERSION  
SAMPLE OpEd  
454 WORDS**



***Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving* This Holiday Season**

The holiday season between Thanksgiving and New Year's is one of the deadliest and most dangerous times of the year due to an increase in impaired driving.

In fact, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 1,201 people across America, just during the month of December 2005, were killed in highway crashes involving a driver or motorcycle operator with a BAC level of .01 or higher. In these crashes, 1,033 involved a driver with an illegal BAC level of .08 or above.

That's why **[Local Organization]** is joining with other national, state and local highway safety officials to remind all holiday partiers that *Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving* and to never forget to designate a sober driver before the festivities begin.

Impaired driving is no accident – nor is it a victimless crime. In 2005, nearly 13,000 people died in highway crashes involving a driver or a motorcycle operator with a BAC of .08 or higher, according to NHTSA.

Too many people still don't understand that alcohol, drugs and driving just don't mix. Too many lives are being lost and we need everyone's help to stop it.

Designating a sober driver and not letting friends drive drunk are just two of several simple steps for a safer Holiday season. Other tips include:

- Plan ahead: Whenever you plan on consuming alcohol, designate your sober driver before going out and give that person your keys;
- If you're impaired, call a taxi, use mass transit or call a sober friend or family member to get you home safely;
- Use your community's Sober Rides program **[insert your local Sober Rides specifics here]**;
- Promptly report drunk drivers you see on the roadways to law enforcement;
- Wearing your seat belt or using protective gear on your motorcycle is your best defense against an impaired driver;
- And remember, *Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk*. 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 any vehicle - including a motorcycle - while impaired is simply wrong and not worth the risk. Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for drunk driving are significant.

This holiday season, don't let your year end in an arrest—or even worse, death. Make smart decisions. Designate your sober driver in advance. And remember, *Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving*. Whether you've had way too many or just one too many, it's not worth the risk. Don't ever drive impaired.

For more information, please visit [www.StopImpairedDriving.org](http://www.StopImpairedDriving.org).

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