



**CITY OF MISSOULA
POLICE DEPARTMENT**
Traffic Unit

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release:

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**This Cinco de Mayo, Who's Your Sober Driver?
Missoula Police Department Cracking Down on Drunk Driving**

Cinco de Mayo in the United States has become synonymous not only with tacos, sombreros, and piñatas, but also with margaritas, tequila, and beer. With alcohol such a big part of many people's Cinco de Mayo festivities, it's no surprise that impaired driving is especially high on May 5. From 2008 to 2012, 233 people were killed in impaired driving crashes on Cinco de Mayo (6 p.m. May 4 to 5:59 a.m. May 6). In 2012, almost half (45 percent) of all traffic crash fatalities on Cinco de Mayo involved impaired driving. That tells us that people aren't planning ahead. The Missoula Police Department is joining with others across the state and nation to remind partygoers that drunk driving should never be part of your Cinco de Mayo plans. The Missoula Police Departments extra patrols will begin on Saturday, May 3 and conclude Monday, May 5.

"Cinco de Mayo has unfortunately become one of the most dangerous days of the year, all because of impaired driving," said Sergeant Greg Amundsen of the Missoula Police Department. "Some people have this misconception that they can drink a little, and drive safely," he added, "but that's just not true. Everyone needs to remember that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*, and there's never an excuse for it."

Every 51 minutes in 2012, someone was killed in an impaired driving crash in the United States, and 89 of those fatalities were around Cinco de Mayo. In fact, from 2011 to 2012, the number of people killed in impaired driving crashes on Cinco de Mayo more than doubled. In all fatal crashes in 2012, seventy-one percent of the impaired drivers involved had blood alcohol concentrations (BAC) of .15 or higher—almost twice the legal limit.

Here's the worst part: These impaired-driving deaths were 100-percent preventable. "We just want everyone to have a safe and happy Cinco de Mayo, by taking a few minutes ahead of time to get a plan together," Amundsen said. "No one ever plans to drive impaired, they just don't have a different plan, so they make a terrible decision."

Preventing drunk driving is as easy as *uno, dos, tres*:

1) Plan your ride ahead of time:

- Designate your sober driver before the fiesta begins; you might even consider paying for his or her food and non-alcoholic drinks; or
- Call a friend or use public transportation; or
- Use Yellow Cab, Green Taxi, the DD Buddy App or U-Dash to get home safely.

2) If you see an impaired driver on the road, contact 911. You could save a life.

3) If you know people who are about to drive or ride while impaired, take their keys and help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.

“It’s a real tragedy that 10,322 people were killed in impaired driving crashes in our nation in 2012,” Amundsen said. “We all need to put a stop to it.” Many lives have been lost or shattered due to impaired driving. Death and injury are the worst consequences, but they aren’t the only ones. A DUI can cost you about \$10,000, and you could go to jail and lose your driver’s license.

This Cinco de Mayo, the Missoula Police Department is cracking down on impaired driving, and those who are caught will be arrested. And think again: Refusing a sobriety breath test won’t keep you out of trouble. In the City of Missoula a refusal will result in loss of license, additional penalties and potentially a blood draw search warrant allowing the arresting officer to get a blood sample for prosecution.

Remember, impaired driving is never the answer, and there’s always another option. If you are going to drink at all on Cinco de Mayo, designate a sober driver, because *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*.

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