

## This Holiday Season, If You Catch A Buzz, Catch A Ride - Local Agency Reminds Everyone To Designate A Sober Driver

*Tarrant Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse Reminds Everyone to Designate a Sober Driver - The holiday season is one of the busiest on the nation's roadways and also one of the most dangerous, due to a high incidence of alcohol-related traffic crashes. Tarrant County leads the state in the number of alcohol-related traffic deaths.*

Fort Worth, TX (PRWEB) December 18, 2004 -- The holiday season is one of the busiest on the nation's roadways and also one of the most dangerous, due to a high incidence of alcohol-related traffic crashes.

Tarrant Council on Alcoholism & Drug Abuse joins national, state and local highway safety and law enforcement officials to remind everyone to always designate a sober driver before each holiday party or event involving alcohol.

"The holiday season is supposed to be a time for family, friends, and festive celebrations, but it is unfortunately also a time when we see a tragic jump in the number of alcohol-related highway fatalities," said Tarrant Council Executive Director Eric Niedermayer. "That's why we are reminding everyone this holiday season, if you catch a buzz, catch a ride."

Nationally, more than 17,000 people died in alcohol-related highway crashes during 2003. Every 30 minutes, nearly 50 times a day, someone in America dies in an alcohol-related crash. Hundreds of thousands more are injured each year. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), alcohol played a part in 47 percent of all traffic-related deaths in the state of Texas last year, compared to 41 percent for the nation. Tarrant County had the highest percentage of alcohol-related traffic deaths at 55 percent.

"Designating a sober driver before the party begins is just one of several, simple steps to remember to help avoid a tragic crash or an arrest for impaired driving," Niedermayer said, while offering these other simple reminders for a safer holiday season:

- Don't even think about getting behind the wheel if you've been out drinking;
- If you are impaired, call a taxi – use mass transit – or get a sober friend or family member to come and get you;
- Or just stay where you are and sleep it off until you are sober;
- And remember – Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk. Take the keys and never let a friend leave your sight if you think they are about to drive while impaired.

"Driving impaired or riding with someone who is impaired is simply not worth the risk," Niedermayer said. "The consequences are serious and real. Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for driving while impaired can be really significant and not the way you want to spend your holiday season."

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