



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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This Halloween, and Every Day, Remember: Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving

October 28, 2020, Medina, Ohio - This Halloween, the Medina County Safe Communities Coalition is reminding Halloween partiers that **Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving**. Halloween night is celebrated by millions of Americans each year, with eager young children looking forward to an evening of trick-or-treating, and adults working on costumes and their Monster Mash skills. This year's holiday falls on a Saturday, which means there will likely be more parties than usual — and more drunk drivers on the streets. To help spread the message that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is teaming up with Medina County Safe Communities to remind everyone of the dangers of drunk driving. Halloween poses an especially dangerous threat to pedestrians, as more people are out at night on the hunt for candy. If your night involves alcohol, plan for a sober ride home. Remember: It's never safe to drink and drive.

Between 2014 and 2018, there were 145 drunk-driving fatalities on Halloween night (6 p.m. October 31 – 5:59 a.m. November 1). According to NHTSA, 41% of all people killed in motor vehicle crashes on Halloween night from 2014 to 2018 were in crashes involving a drunk driver. Adults between the ages of 21 and 34 had the highest percentage (39%) of fatalities in drunk-driving crashes on Halloween night in 2018.

"With Halloween falling on a Saturday this year, we're certain to see extra parties throughout the weekend, and every single partygoer should plan their sober ride home in advance," said Jessica Miles, Safe Communities Project Director. "Even one drink can impair judgement. You should never put yourself, or others, at risk because you made the selfish choice to drink and drive. Even one drink can be one too many. Remember: **Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.**"

Tragically, 36,560 people were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes in 2018, and 29% (10,511) of those fatalities occurred in crashes during which a driver had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) over the legal limit of .08. Drivers should also keep an eye out for pedestrians — whether they be children trick-or-treating or adults who have had too much to drink. Walking while intoxicated can also be deadly, as lack of attention to their surroundings could put pedestrians at risk of getting hit by a vehicle.

"We want our community to have a fun night out on Halloween, but to also stay safe and make responsible choices," said Jessica Miles. "In today's world, there are many options available to drivers to help them get home safely if they have been drinking. We expect drivers to refrain from driving after drinking," she said.

Party with a Plan:

If you plan to head out for a night of Halloween partying, follow these simple tips for a safe and happy evening:

- Plan a safe way to get home ***before*** you attend the party. Alcohol impairs judgement, as well as reaction time. If you're drunk you're more likely to choose to drive drunk.
- Designate a sober driver, take public transportation, a car service, or call a sober friend or family member to get home.
- Walking while impaired can be just as dangerous as drunk driving. Designate a sober friend to walk you home.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact local law enforcement when it is safe to do so.
- If you see someone you think is about to drive while impaired, take their keys and help them get home safely.

Always Remember: Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.

The Medina County Safe Communities Coalition is a collaboration of law enforcement, healthcare providers, fire departments, school districts, the media, and local businesses. Our mission is to save lives and reduce injuries on Medina County roads and highways. The coalition promotes traffic safety through community events, educational opportunities, and enforcement campaigns. For more information, please call 330-723-9688, option 2.

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