

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DRIVE SOBER THIS INDEPENDENCE DAY, AND EVERY DAY:
BUZZED DRIVING IS DRUNK DRIVING**

July 2, 2020, Medina, Ohio – This Independence Day, Medina County Safe Communities and the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) reminds drivers that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. Unfortunately, the summertime merrymaking can create dangerous road conditions, as some drivers hit the streets after drinking alcoholic beverages. Celebrate the birth of our nation safely. If you are under the influence of any substance and you choose to get behind the wheel of a vehicle, you put everyone in a vehicle on the road in danger, including yourself. During the Fourth of July holiday, make sure you plan for a safe weekend of festivities.

"We want our community to have a happy and safe Independence Day, one that they'll remember for years to come, for all the right reasons," said Jessica Miles, Safe Communities Project Director. "We've partnered with NHTSA to help remind drivers that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. Under no circumstance is it ever okay to drink and drive. This behavior is illegal, it's deadly, and it's selfish. If you've been drinking at a Fourth of July party, or for any occasion, find a sober ride home. If you are drunk or high, or even a little buzzed, we are begging you: Stay off the roads," said Miles. "If you plan to be the sober driver, then don't indulge — your friends are relying on you."

According to NHTSA, drunk driving accounted for 29% (10,511) of fatal crashes in 2018. With Fourth of July festivities wrapping up in the evening or late at night, more vehicles will be on the road at night. In 2018 alone, 193 people died in motor vehicle traffic crashes over the July 4th holiday period (6 p.m. July 3 to 5:59 a.m. July 5). Forty percent of those fatalities occurred in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes. This compares to 2017 when 38% of the July 4 holiday period fatalities occurred in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes.

The Medina County Safe Communities Coalition recommends these safe alternatives to drinking and driving:

- Designate a sober driver, use public transportation or use a ride sharing service to get home safely.
- Download the SaferRider mobile app, available for Android devices on Google Play, and Apple devices on the iTunes store.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact local law enforcement.
- Take away the keys of friends that have been drinking. Help them make other arrangements to safely get home.

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.

The Medina County Health Department has protected your health since 1918. Services are partially supported by your property tax health levy. Equal opportunity provider.

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