

# Drinking and Driving Don't Mix

Media Contact:

Arshon Howard

Chief of Community Relations

(302) 744-2675

[Arshon.Howard@Delaware.gov](mailto:Arshon.Howard@Delaware.gov)

## OHS increases DUI enforcement

**November 21 – December 26,  
2021**

[DOVER, Del.] November 18, 2021 – The holiday season is upon us, and this year, the [Delaware Office of Highway Safety](#) (OHS) wants you to give others the gift of holiday safety by pledging not to drink and drive.

During the 2020 winter holiday season, there were 2,646 crashes and 9 deaths on Delaware roads. One-third of those deaths (3) and about 5% (128) of the crashes were DUI-related.

The problem isn't Delaware's alone. According to the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) (NHTSA), drunk driving is a problem on our nation's roads every day, but it's more prevalent during the holidays. Nationally, during the Christmas and New Year's Day holiday periods in 2019, there were more drunk-driving-related fatalities (210) than during any other holiday period that year.



But we've asked, and you've listened. Here in Delaware, we've seen our numbers trending down.

- In 2019, there were 3,083 holiday season crashes and 12 fatalities. 129 of those crashes and 4 of those fatalities were DUI-related.
- In 2018, there were 3,612 holiday season crashes and 15 fatalities. 137 of those crashes and 6 of those fatalities were DUI-related.

While these figures represent a decrease in the first state's DUI-related crashes and fatalities over the winter holiday season, there's still more we can do to protect ourselves and others.

*"The holidays are known for being merry and bright, but they're also known for being one of the deadliest seasons when it comes to drunk driving. Every holiday season, lives are lost due to impaired drivers," says **Kimberly Chesser, Director, Delaware Office of Highway Safety.***

*"These tragedies are preventable. That's why we're asking all Delawareans to commit to keeping the roads free of drunk drivers, so that everyone can have a safe holiday. One way to do that is by celebrating this holiday season with a plan that includes a sober driver."*

---

## **Have a Plan Whether You're Driving, Riding or Hosting:**

- Before drinking, plan a safe and sober ride home, such as a designated driver, ordering a ride through your phone, or by [calling a cab](#).
- Don't let someone get behind the wheel if they've been drinking.
- If you're hosting a gathering, make sure all your guests

have a sober ride home.

- If you see an impaired driver, call 911. And always [wear your seat belt](#) – it's your best defense against impaired drivers.

---

## What we're doing



Law enforcement officers across the state are partnering with OHS to remind drivers it is never okay to drink and drive. From Friday, December 10th

through Sunday, December 26th, Delaware drivers will see more officers on the roads as part of an active DUI-enforcement campaign. The increased enforcement aims to motivate drivers to not drive under the influence of alcohol, as well as remind them of the consequences and dangers of drunk driving. To reinforce the message that drinking and driving doesn't mix, the Office of Highway Safety is also partnering with [MADD](#) (Mothers Against Drunk Driving).

This year marks the 35th year of MADD's 'Tie One On For Safety' campaign, which asks people to tie a red ribbon on their car antennas as a visible reminder to designate a sober, non-drinking driver.

To support our shared mission of preventing drunk driving deaths, OHS will be handing out 1,000 red ribbons at Milton's [Winter WonderFEST](#).

---

# Other Holiday Hazards

Drunk driving is not the only concern during the holiday season. That's why OHS is conducting its annual Safe Family Holiday campaign that runs between Christmas and New Year's, and highlights traffic safety dangers that are more prevalent during the holiday season.

Now that it's getting darker earlier, it's even harder for drivers to see pedestrians. To make sure everyone [arrives alive](#), the Office of Highway Safety (OHS) encourages all pedestrians to carry a flashlight or wear reflective/light-colored clothing. OHS also asks drivers to slow down and to be on the lookout for pedestrians – especially in neighborhoods.

The cold, winter weather also poses challenges for drivers. Rain, sleet, and ice can impact a driver's steering and stopping abilities – making a driver's reaction time even more critical. To help reduce dangerous distractions in the car and keep drivers' eyes on the road, drivers should already have their directions set and routed before they even leave the driveway. Winter storms can also come on suddenly, so drivers should [check the latest weather warnings and traffic and road conditions before they head out](#).

To remind drivers of the extra road risks during the holidays, OHS is conducting several additional enforcement campaigns:

- Law enforcement officers across the state will place a special emphasis on enforcing pedestrian safety laws from November 27th through December 19th.
- There will also be extra enforcement around occupant protection and distracted driving starting November 21st and running through December 19th.

The Office of Highway Safety (OHS) is committed to improving the safety of Delaware's motoring public by focusing on behavioral traffic safety issues, such as impaired driving, seat belt use, speeding, child passenger safety, pedestrian and bicycle safety, motorcycle safety, and teen driving issues. Follow OHS on [ArriveAliveDE.com](https://www.arrivealiveDE.com), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Snapchat](#).