



SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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San Mateo County Sheriff's Office
Public Information Office
400 County Center, 3rd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063
Det. Rosemerry Blankswade
650-363-4800 (office)
650-421-1243 (cell)
pio@smcgov.org

NEWS RELEASE

Incident Date and Time: August 14 through September 2, 2019

Type of Crime/Incident: **Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over**

Summary:

San Mateo County, CA — During the 2019 Labor Day holiday, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office will partner with the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to get drunk drivers off the roads and help save lives. The high-visibility national enforcement campaign, *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*, runs from August 14 through September 2, 2019. During this period, local law enforcement will show zero tolerance for drunk driving. Increased state and national messages about the dangers of driving impaired, coupled with enforcement and increased officers on the road, aim to drastically reduce drunk driving on our nation's roadways.

Sadly, the statistics prove that we have a lot of work to do to put an end to drunk driving. According to NHTSA, 10,874 people were killed in drunk driving crashes in 2017. On average, 10,000 people were killed each year from 2013 to 2017 — one person was killed in drunk driving crashes every 48 minutes in 2017. That's the equivalent of 20 jumbo jets crashing each year, with no survivors. This is why the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office is working with NHTSA to remind drivers that drunk driving is not only illegal, it is a matter of life and death. As you head out to the Labor Day festivities, remember: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*.

During the 2017 Labor Day holiday period (6 p.m. September 1 – 5:59 a.m. September 5), there were 376 crash fatalities nationwide. Forty-four percent of those fatalities involved drivers who had been drinking (.01+ BAC). More than one-third (36%) of the fatalities involved drivers who were drunk (.08+ BAC), and more than one-fourth (26%) involved drivers who were driving with a BAC almost twice the legal limit (.15+ BAC). Age is a particularly risky factor: Among drivers between the ages of 18 and 34 who were killed in crashes over the Labor Day holiday period in 2017, 42% of those drivers were drunk, with BACs of .08 or higher.

"Labor Day should be a time for friends and family to come together to enjoy the last days of summer," said Sheriff Carlos Bolanos. "We need commitment from our community members that they'll keep the streets free of drunk drivers so that everyone can have a safe holiday. This is a campaign to get the message out that drunk driving is illegal and it takes lives. Help us put an end to this senseless behavior," he said.

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office and NHTSA are reminding citizens of the many resources available to get them home safely. "Drunk driving is not acceptable behavior," said Sheriff Carlos Bolanos. "It is essential to plan a sober ride home before you ever leave for the party. That's why, during the Labor Day holiday, we will make zero exceptions for drunk driving. There are just no excuses," he said.

The Sheriff's Office recommends these safe alternatives to drinking and driving:

- Remember that it is never okay to drink and drive. Even if you've had only one alcoholic beverage, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride sharing service to get home safely.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, dial 911.
- Have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

For more information about the *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* campaign, visit <https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/national-mobilization/peak-enforcement-kit>.

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August 8, 2019

