



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 14, 2021

This Memorial Day don't become a Memory

[CITY, Texas] – During the 2019 Memorial Day weekend in Texas, there were a total of 360 DUI-alcohol related traffic crashes, according to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Those crashes killed 16 people and seriously injured another 34.

All of these were 100 percent preventable crashes. **Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service** is teaming up with TxDOT to spread the message about the dangers of drunk driving. Even one drink can be one too many.

As people head to the lake, beach, or host a BBQ, they may choose to drink alcohol or use impairing drugs. Texas law enforcement officers will be out in force looking for impaired drivers. For people that choose to not drive sober, their chance for being arrested for a DWI immensely increases.

“We understand people are looking for a reason to celebrate, and we want our community members to enjoy the Memorial Day weekend, but we also want to impress upon everyone the importance of safe driving,” said **AgriLife Extension Family and Community Health Agent Kay Rogers, Dallam & Hartley Counties** “If you’ve been drinking, make the right choice to find a sober driver to get you, and your friends, home safely.

According to NHTSA, 10,142 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes in 2019. On average, more than 10,000 people were killed each year from 2015 to 2019—one person was killed in a drunk-driving crash every 52 minutes in 2019. Therefore, AgriLife Extension is working with NHTSA to remind drivers that drunk driving is not only illegal, but also a matter of life and death. Help AgriLife Extension and NHTSA spread the word this Memorial Day weekend: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.*

“Drunk drivers are a continuing problem on our nation’s roads, especially around Memorial Day weekend,” said **AgriLife Extension Family and Community Health Agent Kay Rogers, Dallam & Hartley Counties**. “People need to know that they can go out for a night of fun and return home safely by ensuring they have a sober driver to take them home. Don’t be the reason someone—including yourself—doesn’t get home.

If selected as the designated driver, make sure to keep that promise of safety to passengers. It can be a long day and even into the night, but people are counting on the designated driver, not to mention the other drivers, passengers, and pedestrians on the streets. Take the role of designated driver seriously—lives are depending on it.



Party with a Plan

Before ever heading out, it is vital to plan ahead. Be honest about consuming alcohol: Know whether if drinking alcohol is planned or not. Follow these ideas to ensure that all partygoers stay safe.

- Remember: It is never OK to drink and drive. Even if only one alcoholic beverage was consumed, designate a sober driver—or plan to use public transportation or a ride service to get home safely.
- If available, use the community’s sober ride program.
- Impaired driving IS an emergency. Call 911 to report a suspected impaired driver.
- If you have a friend who has been drinking and is about to drive? Take their keys away and make arrangements to get them home safely or allow for them to stay the night.

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Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service’s *Watch UR BAC* program is a free, statewide program to promote alcohol awareness, the dangers of impaired driving, and friends watching out for friends.

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