

CMPD steps up enforcement for St. Patrick's Day

As part of the Costa Mesa Police Department's (CMPD) continued commitment to reducing injury and fatalities caused by impaired drivers, CMPD's Traffic Unit will deploy additional officers on special DUI Saturation Patrols Friday, March 17, 2017, to stop and arrest drivers showing signs of alcohol or drug impairment.

In addition to this St. Patrick's Day enforcement effort, all police, sheriff deputies, and the CHP will be on heightened alert ready to stop and arrest any impaired driver throughout the long weekend. St. Patrick's Day is a popular holiday to celebrate and party.

Unfortunately, too many people are taking to the roads after drinking, making this holiday one of our most dangerous. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 252 people lost their lives in drunk driving-related crashes during the St. Patrick's Day holiday period from 2011 to 2015. More than a fourth of them were killed in drunk driving crashes that occurred in the early morning, post-party hours between midnight and 5:59 a.m.

That is why CMPD and the California Office of Traffic Safety are teaming up to reach all drivers with an important life-saving message and warning: "Don't drive impaired by drugs or alcohol."

If you plan to celebrate this St. Patrick's Day, follow these tips to stay safe:

- Before celebrating St. Patrick's Day this year, decide whether you will drink or you will drive.
- If you are planning on driving, commit to staying sober.
- Drugs such as prescription medications, marijuana, or

illicit drugs can also lead to impairment and unsafe driving, leading to a DUI. When mixed with even a small amount of alcohol the affects can be compounded.

- If you have been drinking, you have many choices to get home safely. You can call a taxi, sober friend, or family member. You also have the option to use public transportation or a location-based app used to purchase a ride through a private driver.
- Download the Designated Driver VIP free mobile app, "DDVIP," for Android or iPhone. The DDVIP app helps find nearby bars and restaurants that feature free incentives for the designated sober driver, from free non-alcoholic drinks to free appetizers and more. The feature-packed app even has social media tie-ins and a tab to call Uber, Lyft, or Curb.
- Help those around you be responsible. Walking while impaired can put you at risk of getting hit by a vehicle.

This enforcement effort is funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the NHTSA, who reminds everyone to be alert and "report drunk drivers – call 911" immediately if you see a dangerous driver!