



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Joyce Blaschke

(831) 420 – 5844, jblaschke@santacruzca.gov

Don't Be the 'I' in DUI: Be a Hero, Designate a Sober Driver

Celebrate Fourth of July Responsibly

Santa Cruz, Calif. – The Santa Cruz Police Department reminds drivers to be the real heroes of the night by prioritizing the safety of everyone on the road this Fourth of July. Plan ahead and celebrate the holiday responsibly.

Beginning Monday, July 1, through Sunday, July 7, the Santa Cruz Police Department will have additional officers on patrol looking for drivers suspected of being under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

In 2022, 487 people were killed in crashes throughout the country during the Fourth of July holiday period. Of those deadly crashes, 40% involved alcohol. In California, 68 people were killed in crashes during last year's Independence Day holiday period. In addition, California Highway Patrol officers made nearly 1,224 arrests for driving under the influence – an average of one DUI arrest every five minutes.

"Choosing a sober driver is not just about following the law; it's about saving lives," Lieutenant Wes Morey said. "If you plan on celebrating the Fourth of July with a drink, we want you to make a plan to go safely with a sober ride home. Think of your loved ones, friends, and family before getting behind the wheel."

While some festivities may include alcohol, driving under the influence also includes impairment from prescription drugs, over-the-counter medications and marijuana. Do your research and be informed about how certain drugs may affect your driving ability.

If you are hosting friends and family for barbecues and watching fireworks shows, offer nonalcoholic drinks for designated sober drivers and monitor who is drinking. If you see people leaving who have been drinking, offer to have them stay the night or make arrangements for them to take a sober ride home.

If you see someone who appears impaired or driving recklessly, call 9-1-1.

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