



SKOKIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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. Don't Drink and Drive this Independence Day

SKOKIE, IL) – Every year, Americans head out on our roads to celebrate the Fourth of July at picnics, parties, parades and more. Unfortunately, for many, the celebrating includes drinking alcohol, which too often leads to drunk driving on one of the most traveled holidays of the year.

That's why the Skokie Police Department will be on patrol this Independence Day, making sure motorists are driving sober.

“Don't even think about drinking and driving this Fourth of July – or you will be arrested,” said Sergeant Richard Wolfer. “The ‘Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over’ campaign means zero tolerance for drunk driving – no excuses.”

In addition to looking for drunk drivers, the Skokie Police Department will be stepping up seat belt enforcement, particularly at night when seat belt usage rates are at their lowest.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data shows that young drivers (18 to 34 years old) are especially at risk of driving drunk. In fact, nationally, 58 percent of the drivers 18 to 34 years old who were killed over the July Fourth period in 2014 were driving drunk (BAC of .08 or higher). Motorcycle operators are also overrepresented as the highest percentage of alcohol-impaired drivers in fatal crashes. In 2014, more than a quarter (29 percent) of motorcycle operators in fatal crashes had BACs of .08 or higher.

If you're caught driving drunk this Independence Day, you will be arrested. The consequences of drunk driving are that serious. Not only could you put your life and the lives of others at risk, but a DUI arrest means a loss of freedom and money, including going to jail, losing your license, and paying steep financial expenses.

Sergeant Richard Wolfer wants you to know that always designating a sober driver and not letting friends drive drunk are just two simple steps to help avoid a tragic crash or an arrest for drunk driving. Other important tips include:

If you are hosting an Independence Day party:

- Remember, you can be held liable and prosecuted if someone you serve is involved in a drunk driving crash.
- Make sure all of your guests designate a sober driver in advance or help arrange ride-sharing with other sober drivers.

- Serve lots of food and include lots of non-alcoholic beverages at the party.
- Keep the phone numbers for local cab companies handy and take the keys away from anyone who is thinking of driving drunk.

If you are attending an Independence Day party:

- Designate a sober driver before the party begins and give that person your car keys.
- If you do not have a designated driver, ask a sober friend for a ride home, call a cab, sober friend or family member to pick you up, or just stay where you are and sleep it off until you are sober.
- Never let friends leave your sight if you think they are about to drive while drunk.
- Always buckle up – it is your best defense against a drunk driver.

Pedestrians are at risk, too. If you are walking, keep an eye out for cars. Even a sober driver is a risk if you are drinking and walking. Designated drivers: Be alert for impaired walkers who may not obey street signs.

The Independence Day “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” crackdown is funded by federal traffic safety funds from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration administered through the Illinois Department of Transportation.

