



# BLOOMINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT



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## ***Make It to the Table This Thanksgiving; BPD Urging Traffic Safety***

**Bloomington, IL** - As the Thanksgiving Holiday weekend approaches, the Bloomington Police Department is urging driver's to slow down, buckle up, and designate a sober driver. The BPD will be stepping up traffic safety over this holiday weekend to keep our roadways safe.

Bloomington Police Chief Jamal Simington said, "We know our community will be excited to gather around the Thanksgiving table this year, however, we are urging holiday drivers to take their time, eliminate distractions, and if intoxicated to designate a sober driver. Unfortunately, drunk driving is a real threat to our community, it's a deadly risk that no one should ever take."

It's essential to take some time to remember that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. If your plans to celebrate include alcohol, plan for a sober driver. You may have heard of the popular trend during the Thanksgiving holiday, "Blackout Wednesday," which occurs on the eve of Thanksgiving. Unfortunately, this trend encourages the heavy consumption of alcohol, which is why we're working hard to keep drunk drivers off the roads.

This Thanksgiving Eve, NHTSA and its partners are conducting a social media blitz to remind drivers that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. NHTSA's goal is to deliver lifesaving messages into the public conversation and to encourage positive actions that can help reduce impaired driving on the roadways. Remember: In Illinois, it is illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 or higher. If you are under the influence of any impairing substance, hand the keys to a sober friend instead of driving yourself home.

Drunk-driving-related crashes spike during the Thanksgiving holiday season. According to NHTSA, from 2015 to 2019, 135 drivers involved in fatal crashes on Thanksgiving Eve (6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.) were alcohol-impaired, and over the entire holiday period (6 p.m. the Wednesday before Thanksgiving through 5:59 a.m. the Monday after Thanksgiving), nearly 800 people died in alcohol-impaired crashes. In fact, during the 2019 Thanksgiving holiday period, more than four times as many drivers involved in fatal crashes were alcohol-impaired during nighttime hours than during the day. In Bloomington, the BPD responds to an average of 34 crashes, and 6 of those result in an injury for at least one or more parties.

The bottom line is this: If you know you're headed out for a night of drinking, make sure you plan for a sober ride home. It is never safe to get behind the wheel of a vehicle while drunk or otherwise impaired. Remember:

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*Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.*

### **Celebrate with a Plan**

If you're planning to head out to the bar or to parties during the Thanksgiving holiday, make sure you plan for a sober ride home. Here are a few tips to help you prepare for a safe night out.

- 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 service to get home safely.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, **contact 911 or BPD's non-emergency number of 309-820-8888.**
- Do you have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get your friend home safely.

By working together, we can save lives and help keep America's roadways safe. Please join us in sharing the lifesaving message *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving* during the holiday weekend.

For more information, please visit <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving>.

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