



## 2019 THANKSGIVING

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday November 25, 2019**

**CONTACT: Chief James C. Burroughs, Newport Police Department**

### **Commit to Sober Driving This Thanksgiving Holiday: #BoycottBlackoutWednesday**

Newport Police, 11/25/19 – Thanksgiving is a holiday that centers around gratitude, family and friends, and a lot of food. A popular trend during the Thanksgiving holiday, “Blackout Wednesday” occurs on the Eve of Thanksgiving. Unfortunately, the trend encourages the heavy consumption of alcohol. To help keep Americans safe on the streets, the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is teaming up with the Newport Police Department to spread the message that drunk driving is dangerous and illegal, period. In fact, it is illegal in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington, DC. If you are under the influence of any impairing substance, hand the keys to a sober friend instead of driving yourself home.

This Thanksgiving Eve, on November 27, NHTSA and its partners are conducting a social media blitz featuring the hashtag #BoycottBlackoutWednesday to help deliver lifesaving messages into the public conversation and encourage positive actions that can help reduce impaired driving on the roadways.

“Drunk and buzzed driving is a real threat to our community every day, and that threat increases during holidays like Thanksgiving,” said Chief Jim Burroughs. “Blackout Wednesday is a dangerous trend. Driving under the influence is deadly and illegal, and no one should ever take that risk.”

Drunk-driving-related crashes spike during the Thanksgiving holiday season. According to NHTSA, from 2013 to 2017, more than 800 people died in alcohol-impaired-driving crashes during the Thanksgiving holiday period (6 p.m. Wednesday to 5:59 a.m. Monday), making it one of the deadliest holidays on our roadways. In fact, during 2017, more than one out of every three traffic fatalities during the Thanksgiving holiday period involved an alcohol-impaired driver. 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: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*.

#### **Options to Get Home Safely**

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. Don’t leave your house without a plan on how to get home safely – once you start drinking you likely won’t make good choices. Here are a few tips to help you prepare for a safe night out.



- Remember that it is never okay to drive impaired. Whether you've had one alcoholic beverage, an impairing substance, or both, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation or a ride sharing service to get home safely.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact your local law enforcement agency, if in Newport, call 863-3232.
- 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*, and use the hashtag #BoycottBlackoutWednesday during the holiday weekend.

For more information, please visit [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/buzzed-driving-drunk-driving/thanksgiving-eve](http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/buzzed-driving-drunk-driving/thanksgiving-eve).

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