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Rock County Law Enforcement Agencies Participating in Impaired Driving Task Force

December 17, 2020 – Rock County law enforcement will be conducting high-visibility traffic enforcement as part of the Rock County Impaired Driving Enforcement Task Force this month. This special enforcement is part of the “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” campaign from Friday, December 18 through New Year’s Day, January 1. During the national holiday campaign, law enforcement agencies across Wisconsin will patrol in greater numbers, for longer hours, watching for impaired drivers.

The task force is comprised of the City of Beloit, Town of Beloit, Janesville, Clinton, and Orfordville police departments and Rock County Sheriff’s Office. Extra law enforcement officers will be on patrol on December 18, 19 and 31 as part of the special enforcement.

“About every three hours in Wisconsin, someone is injured or killed in an alcohol-related crash,” City of Beloit Police Sgt. Eric Rohrer said. “This campaign is not about stopping or arresting motorists. It’s about saving lives and preventing needless tragedies. I think we can all agree that 2020 has not been a banner year. We need all drivers to make smart, responsible decisions and not make it any worse.”

Last year in Wisconsin, there were 6,058 alcohol-related crashes that injured 2,918 people and resulted in 140 deaths (about one-quarter of all traffic fatalities).

While alcohol-impaired drivers remain a concern, a growing problem involves drug-impaired drivers - people whose ability to safely operate a motor vehicle is compromised by legal or illegal drugs including prescription and over-the-counter medications. Recent research by the National Highway Traffic Safety showed that crash victims had a higher prevalence of alcohol, cannabinoids and opioids in their systems during the pandemic than before it.

To help combat impaired driving, Wisconsin has:

- 5,223 police officers trained in Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) to help detect and remove impaired drivers from the roadways;
- 310 highly-trained Drug Recognition Experts - among the most in the nation;
- [23 multi-jurisdictional high-visibility enforcement task forces](#) operating throughout the year, across the state.

Residents can help in several ways:

- If you plan to celebrate, identify a sober designated driver or find a safe alternative way home. Never allow someone to get behind the wheel impaired.
- Protect yourself and your passengers every time you travel. Ensure everyone is buckled up. Watch your speed and eliminate distractions.
- Download the free “Drive Sober” mobile app from the [WisDOT website](#). The app includes a “find a ride” feature to help locate mass transit and taxi services;
- Some taverns and restaurants have programs to provide patrons a [safe ride home](#).
- If you encounter a driver you suspect is impaired, call 911. Provide as much detail as possible on the driver, vehicle and location.

“Drivers impaired by alcohol or other drugs risk the safety of everyone along our roadways,” Rohrer said. “During the Drive Sober campaign and throughout the year, our goal is to help ensure all travelers reach their destinations safely.”

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