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KDOT, KHP and KTA stress the impact of impaired driving during the holidays

The holiday season often brings people together to celebrate. The Kansas Department of Transportation, Kansas Highway Patrol and Kansas Turnpike Authority remind all drivers to understand the impact of impaired driving during their celebrations.

Impaired driving is illegal and deadly. Last year from Dec. 19, 2023-Jan. 1, 2024, KDOT records indicate nine people died in Kansas crashes. Impairment including drugs and alcohol was involved in 19 crashes where 12 people were injured.

“We’re reminded of the value of our relationships with others during each holiday season,” said KDOT Transportation Secretary Calvin Reed. “Everyone should do their part to make sure they arrive at their holiday celebrations safely.”

Drivers will see increased law enforcement presence on Kansas roads during the holiday season, as part of the national campaigns *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* and *If you Feel Different, You Drive Different. Drive High, Get a DUI.*

“During this Christmas and New Year’s holiday, law enforcement officers across the state are determined to prevent impaired driving crashes that lead to injury and fatal crashes,” said KHP Superintendent Colonel Erik Smith.

The average cost of a DUI is about \$10,000 in attorney’s fees, fines, court costs, lost time at work, higher insurance rates and more. Offenders can also lose their driver’s licenses.

“Driving impaired is a choice,” said KTA CEO Steve Hewitt. “It’s essential for everyone to take responsibility, plan ahead and ensure their celebrations don’t end in tragedy.”

KDOT, KHP and KTA want all drivers to make traffic safety a priority throughout the year as well as during the holidays. Before the celebrations begin, make a plan. Use a designated driver, a rideshare or a cab. If a friend is leaving a holiday celebration impaired, take the keys. If you see an impaired driver on the road, contact law enforcement.

For more information on impaired driving: www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunck-driving.

For the latest updates on road closures and conditions, visit KanDrive.gov, call 511 in Kansas or 866-511-5368 outside Kansas. Travelers who need assistance on the highway can dial *47 for the KHP or *582 while on the KTA. If it's an emergency, call 911.

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