

Press Release



Greene County Public Health

A Safe Communities Grantee of Ohio Department of Public Safety
Ohio State Highway Patrol-Traffic Safety Division
360 Wilson Drive, Xenia, OH 45385



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NHTSA and the Greene County Safe Communities Coalition Remind Drivers That *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*

XENIA, OH — With the Thanksgiving holiday approaching, the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) urges drivers to remember throughout Thanksgiving gatherings that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*.

Drinking and driving is a crime that has claimed the lives of many individuals during past Thanksgiving holiday festivities. According to NHTSA, 184 people died in drunk-driving crashes, in which one or more drivers had a blood alcohol level of .08 or higher, during the 2022 Thanksgiving holiday (6 p.m. Wednesday – 5:59 a.m. Monday). Drivers ages 21-34 (32%) were the age group with the highest rate of involvement in fatal drunk-driving crashes on Thanksgiving 2022. From 2018-2022, the death toll in drunk-driving crashes during Thanksgiving festivities was 833, representing 34% of all fatalities in traffic crashes for that period.

NHTSA data shows that, on average, nearly 12,000 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes each year from 2018 to 2022, and that one person was killed in a drunk-driving crash every 39 minutes in 2022.

“Driving under the influence of alcohol is never an option,” said Loressa Gonyer, Health Educator and Safe Communities Coordinator. “Even one drink can be enough to impair a person’s judgment and driving ability. Having a plan in place for safe transportation before having the first drink is the responsible way to avoid the dangers of impaired driving this Thanksgiving. Drivers can keep themselves, their passengers, and other families safe on the road by recognizing that *Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving* and by making plans to drive sober or get a sober ride home.”

Drivers should be safe during Thanksgiving by planning ahead if they intend to drink. They shouldn’t wait until after drinking to plan how to get somewhere. Impairment clouds a person’s judgment. Drivers should secure a designated sober driver or call a taxi or rideshare for a sober ride home.

If a driver finds they are unable to drive, they should give their keys to a sober driver so that person can get them home safely. When a friend has been drinking and is considering driving, friends should be proactive — take away the keys and help them get a sober ride home. If anyone spots a drunk driver, contact local law enforcement.

In a time of gratitude, warmth and gathering, all drivers are reminded to keep the Thanksgiving holiday spirit alive by making responsible choices and prioritizing the safety of all road users. Drive 100% sober, because *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. For more information on impaired driving, visit www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving.

For more information about Greene County Safe Communities, please call Loressa Gonyer at 937-374-5655 or email lgonyer@gcph.info.

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