



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Annual Impaired Driving Campaign Reminds Drivers: Plan Ahead and Drive Sober**

Barre, Vt. — The Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) joins law enforcement agencies across the state and nation in urging drivers to make plans and drive sober this Labor Day holiday. From August 16 through September 2, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) will be working alongside law enforcement across the country for the impaired driving high-visibility enforcement campaign.

"Safety is always our highest priority," said Transportation Secretary Joe Flynn. "The statistics for impaired driving and fatalities caused by impaired drivers are disturbing, and we urge Vermonters to plan ahead to ensure that they never drive while impaired and put themselves and other people in danger."

In Vermont, from 2019 to 2023, 56% of all fatal vehicle crashes involved an impaired driver (impaired includes both drugs and alcohol), and 237 children were involved in crashes with impaired drivers. In 2023, there were 42 fatalities involving an impaired driver.

Nationwide during the 2022 Labor Day weekend, there were 490 crash fatalities, of which 39% involved a drunk driver and 25% involved drivers with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) almost twice the legal limit (.15+ BAC). Among drivers between the ages of 18 and 34 who were killed in crashes during Labor Day weekend in 2022, 47% of those drivers were drunk, with a BAC of .08 or higher.

"Our first priority is to keep people safe, so we're asking everyone to plan ahead if they know they'll be out drinking or using drugs," said Lieutenant Kevin Geno of the Rutland County Sheriff's Department. "The impaired driving campaign is intended to raise awareness and get the message out that impaired driving is illegal and takes lives. We are asking drivers to be our partners to help us protect the community and put an end to impaired driving."

Drivers should stay safe during this Labor Day holiday weekend – and at all times – by planning ahead if they intend to drink or use drugs. They should not wait until after partaking to plan how to get home. Drivers should secure a designated sober driver or call a friend, family member, or rideshare for a sober ride home.

If drivers are unable to drive, they should give their keys to a sober driver so that person can get them home safely. When someone you know has been drinking or using drugs and is considering driving, be

proactive: take away the keys, and help them get a sober ride home. If anyone spots an impaired driver, contact local law enforcement or the Vermont State Police.

The State Highway Safety Office wants to remind our road users that impaired driving is 100% preventable. Please make the right decision, and do not to drive while impaired. Drive Well, Vermont.

For more information on impaired driving, visit [www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving](http://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving/drunk-driving).

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