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PRESS RELEASE

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Don't Rely on the Luck o' the Irish this St. Patrick's Day ***Drive sober and buckle up for a safe celebration***

Lake in the Hills, IL – Each year, Saint Patrick's Day is celebrated with city parades, funny leprechaun hats, and plenty o' green beer. Unfortunately, it often ends with risky impaired drivers taking to the streets when the parties end. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), people driving under the influence of alcohol account for nearly one-third of vehicle-related fatalities in the United States. The Lake in the Hills Police Department will conduct special patrols from March 12-18, 2020, to keep alcohol and drug impaired drivers off the roads. Officers will also be inspecting seat belt compliance, so be sure to buckle up – it's your best defense in the event of a crash.

St. Patrick's Day is one of the deadliest festivities on the nation's roads. According to NHTSA, during the 2014-2018 St. Patrick's Day, 249 lives were lost due to drunk-driving crashes. In 2018 alone, 73 people were killed in drunk-driving crashes on St. Patrick's Day - these accounted for 39% of all traffic fatalities during the St. Patrick's Day festive period. This St. Patrick's Day weekend, remember: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*.

If you plan to go out and enjoy the evening with alcohol, make sure you refrain from driving. Designating a sober driver and not letting friends drive drunk are two easy ways to avoid a tragic crash or an arrest for drunk driving. Pedestrians are at risk, too. If you are walking, keep an eye out for cars. Designated drivers should remain alert for impaired walkers who may not obey street signs and pedestrian signals. Below are some additional tips.

If you are hosting a St. Patrick's Day party:

- Remember that you can be held liable and potentially prosecuted if someone you serve is involved in an impaired driving crash.

Any criminal or traffic complaint(s) that have been filed against any individual(s) named herein are only an accusation. All defendant(s) are presumed innocent unless proven guilty in a court of law. All inquiries regarding this press release are to be directed to the Communications Coordinator at 847-658-5676 unless otherwise noted.

- Make sure all guests designate a sober driver in advance or help arrange ride-sharing with sober drivers.
- Download a ride-sharing app on your phone to help partygoers.
- Serve plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages.
- Take keys away from anyone who is attempting to drive impaired.

If you are going out to celebrate St. Patrick's Day:

- Designate a sober driver ahead of time and give that person your car keys.
- If you do not have a designated driver, ask a sober friend for a ride home, call a ride-sharing company, have a sober friend or family member pick you up, or just stay where you are and sleep it off until you are sober.
- Never let a friend leave your sight if you think they are about to drive impaired.
- Buckle up – it's your best defense in a crash.

The St. Patrick's Day enforcement campaign is part of the Illinois *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* and *Click It or Ticket* programs supported through federal funds administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation.

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