



State of New Hampshire

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

NEW HAMPSHIRE LAW ENFORCEMENT PLANS HIGH VISIBILITY ENFORCEMENT ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY; DRIVERS URGED TO OPERATE SOBER

CONCORD, NH – The New Hampshire Department of Safety is alerting drivers of a planned high visibility enforcement effort between its Division of State Police and local law enforcement on St. Patrick's Day to target impaired operators and save lives.

On Thursday, the Division of State Police will have approximately two dozen additional Troopers on patrol focused specifically on identifying and apprehending impaired drivers.

"New Hampshire has zero tolerance for drivers who operate under the influence. It puts their lives and the lives of innocent others at risk," Department of Safety Commissioner Robert L. Quinn said at a press conference held Wednesday. "All it takes is one decision to change your life, and the lives of others."

In 2021, 15 people faced DWI-related consequences on St. Patrick's Day.

"If you're going to make the choice to drink alcohol, please plan ahead with a designated driver," said Beth Shaw, of Concord, whose 20-year-old son, Tyler, was killed by a drunk driver in 2018. "Don't hesitate to call a friend or a family member if you need a ride. Also, don't let friends get behind the wheel if they're impaired. Trust me when I tell you, someone's life depends on it."

According to state-collected data, from 2015 to 2020, 198 people were killed in alcohol-impaired crashes in New Hampshire. One of the victims, a Massachusetts man, was killed in Errol on St. Patrick's Day in 2016. Additionally, the average BAC (blood alcohol concentration) of drivers involved in the deadly crashes over the five-year period was 0.181%, more than double the legal limit. 37.9% (75) of the 198 victims were 29 years of age or younger.

“Every single one of these crashes was preventable. The act of driving impaired is not a mistake,” said Department of Safety Assistant Commissioner Eddie Edwards. “There is no excuse. Have a ride. Have a plan. Get home safely.”

Under New Hampshire state law, an individual who is caught driving impaired could face serious consequences including a mandatory suspended license, a minimum fine of \$500, misdemeanor or felony criminal charges, jail time, the requirement of an ignition interlock device, attendance of a driver education program, and higher insurance rates.

Photos from Wednesday’s press conference can be downloaded here: <https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjzG1Nr>
Media members have permission to use the images, with credit to the New Hampshire Department of Safety.

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About the Department:

The New Hampshire Department of Safety is one of the largest departments of state government, with more than 2,200 full-time, part-time, non-classified, and seasonal employees functioning in both uniformed and civilian capacities throughout the State. The Department affects the lives of all New Hampshire residents and visitors by enforcing criminal, motor vehicle and boating laws, and providing for fire safety, fire and emergency medical training, emergency communications and disaster planning. Established by the New Hampshire General Court in 1961, the Department consists of the divisions of Administration, Emergency Services and Communications, Fire Safety (Office of the State Fire Marshal), Fire Standards and Training & Emergency Medical Services, Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Motor Vehicles and State Police. Follow us on [Twitter](#), like us on [Facebook](#) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#).