

# Dept. of Transportation: State troopers target drunk drivers with special patrols during Country USA

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Note to media: Wisconsin State Patrol Sergeant Dan Diedrich will be available for interviews beginning Monday, June 19, to discuss the saturation patrol and underage drinking and driving. Please contact Sgt. Diedrich to arrange interview time.

For more information, contact:

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(Fox Cities) The Wisconsin Division of State Patrol (DSP) reminds Country USA event goers to enjoy the music and designate a designated driver if you plan on drinking at the concert. To combat drunk driving, DSP will again have extra patrols on the roads around the festival venue to target intoxicated drivers. Special Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) Saturation Patrols will be in effect for the five-day concert beginning Tuesday, June 19.

Local law enforcement is especially concerned with the recent trend of drunk drivers leaving Country USA events who are not of legal age to drink alcohol.

“We have really noticed an uptick in underage drinking at Country USA. Unfortunately, those not of legal age to drink are making the deadly decision to get behind the wheel as well,” said Sergeant Dan Diedrich, Wisconsin State Patrol, Fond du Lac Post. “Law enforcement officers are well trained in identifying the signs of impaired driving, and they know where and when to look for drunken drivers.”

Sergeant Diedrich notes that any amount of alcohol in a person under 21 years of age and driving is illegal, and they will get a citation for a violation of the absolute sobriety law and possibly arrested for OWI.

If drivers make the irresponsible and reckless decision to get behind the wheel while impaired, officers are ready to stop, test and arrest them with increased patrols on area roads. OWI Saturation Patrols receive special funding that provides officer overtime and increased law enforcement presence where impaired driving is highest.

“Our goal is to get people to drive sober, not to make more arrests,” explains Sergeant Diedrich. “Events like Country USA are important and vital to our local economy, but just one bad decision to drink and drive following the concert can turn a night of fun memories into a lifetime of nightmares, pain and even death.”

To help prevent drunken driving, WisDOT offers a free Drive Sober mobile app. You can use the Blood Alcohol Estimator to find out if you’re sober enough to drive, select a sober driver with the Designated Driver Selector, choose your ride and get home safely with the Find a Ride feature, report a drunk driver, and more. To download the app for free, please see the Wisconsin Traffic Safety website at <http://witrafficsafety.org/>.