

# Dept. of Transportation: Holiday highway safety campaign begins Friday

Posted on Wednesday, Dec 16, 2020

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

To enhance public safety and discourage impaired driving, law enforcement agencies across Wisconsin will patrol in greater numbers and for longer hours watching for impaired drivers. The “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” holiday safety campaign begins Friday, December 18 and continues through New Year’s Day.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) uses federal funds to support stepped-up law enforcement efforts along with public education and outreach to help deter impaired driving.

“Reports indicate that alcohol and drug use has increased nationwide during the pandemic,” WisDOT Secretary-designee Craig Thompson said. “We need all drivers to make smart, responsible decisions and make this a safe holiday season.”

In 2020, fatal crashes in Wisconsin involving an impaired driver, year to date, increased by 23 percent. This increase follows several years of declining numbers.

Source: WisDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety & Tech. Services

“This campaign is not about stopping or arresting motorists. It’s about saving lives and preventing needless tragedies,” Wisconsin State Patrol Superintendent Anthony Burrell said. “Motorists can do their part by buckling up, driving sober and avoiding distractions.”

While alcohol-impaired driving remains a concern, Wisconsin and many states see a growing challenge with drugged drivers – people whose ability to safely operate a motor vehicle is compromised by drugs including prescription or over-the-counter medications and illegal narcotics.

In addition to annual holiday campaigns, Wisconsin currently combats this problem with:

- [25 multi-jurisdictional, high-visibility OWI enforcement task forces](#) that operate year-round across the state.
- Nearly 6,000 law enforcement officers trained in Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) to help detect and remove impaired drivers from roadways.
- 301 highly-trained Drug Recognition Experts – among the most in the nation.

### **How you can help:**

- If you plan to celebrate, identify a sober designated driver. Never allow someone else to get behind the wheel impaired.
- Download the free “Drive Sober” mobile app from the [WisDOT website](#). It includes a “find a ride” feature to help locate transportation alternatives.
- Some taverns and restaurants have programs to provide patrons a safe ride home. Visit [tlw.org](#) and select the “Safe Ride” tab.
- If you suspect a driver of being impaired, call 911. Be prepared to provide as much detail as possible about the driver, vehicle and location.