NEWS RELEASE

Incident Date and Time: Tuesday, March 17, 2020
Location: San Mateo County
Type of Crime/Incident: Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving

Summary:
San Mateo County, CA — This weekend, the nation will observe St. Patrick's Day, an international holiday that is commonly associated with drinking at bars and pubs. To ensure public safety, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office is reminding everyone that Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.

Every year, there is a spike in impaired driving incidents on St. Patrick's Day, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The selfish act of drinking and driving can take people from their friends and loved ones forever. For this reason, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office is working to spread the message about the dangers of drunk driving. Even one drink can be one too many. If you're heading out for the festivities, plan ahead and remember: Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving.

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office will be looking for signs of alcohol and drug impairment. When possible, specially trained officers will be available to evaluate those suspected of drug-impaired driving, which accounts for a growing number of impaired driving crashes.

In recent years, California has seen an increase in drug-impaired driving crashes. The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office supports the new effort from the Office of Traffic Safety that aims to educate all drivers that “DUI Doesn’t Just Mean Booze.” If you take prescription drugs, particularly those with a driving or operating machinery warning on the label, you might be impaired enough to get a DUI. Marijuana use can also be impairing, especially in combination with alcohol or other drugs, and can result in a DUI.

Remember: It’s not just about you. There are other people on the roads who want to get where they are going safely. Don’t let alcohol or drug impairment cause you to be a risk to yourself and others on the road. Impaired driving is an act of selfishness. Before you put your keys in the ignition, remind yourself: Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving. If you feel a buzz, you are in no shape to drive.
The San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office recommends the following safe alternatives to drinking and driving:

- Always remember to plan ahead. If you plan to drink, plan for a sober driver to take you home. Is it your turn to be the designated driver? Take that role seriously—your friends are relying on you.
- There are many other ways to ensure a safe ride home besides relying on a friend. The OTS DDVIP app is now available for free download on iOS and Android devices. The app offers enhanced features, allowing users to search all participating bars and restaurants throughout California. Additionally, the app users can easily order a sober ride from Uber, Lyft, or Curb.
- Have a friend who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away, and make arrangements to get them home safely.
- Always remember to report drunk drivers - call 911.

“We want everyone to enjoy the St. Patrick’s Day festivities responsibly, and driving impaired can have deadly consequences. Please plan ahead for a safe and sober ride home.” - Sheriff Carlos Bolanos

Written by: Sgt. Jake Trickett, San Carlos Police Bureau

Release Date: 3/10/2020