# 2023 Blackout Wednesday *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*

### FACT SHEET & TALKING POINTS

This Thanksgiving, the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is teaming up with **[State/Local Organization]** to keep you safe on the roads. On Thanksgiving Eve, also known as “Drinksgiving” or “Blackout Wednesday,” there is an increase in the overconsumption of alcohol. NHTSA is urging drivers to make the right choice to refuse to drink and drive by spreading the message that *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. Read the statistics below and help spread this lifesaving message.

* From 2017 to 2021, 137 drivers involved in fatal crashes on Thanksgiving Eve (6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.) were alcohol impaired. In 2021 alone, 36 drivers were alcohol-impaired in fatal crashes on Thanksgiving Eve.
* From 2017 to 2021, young drivers ages 21-24 represented the largest percentage (44%) of alcohol-impaired drivers involved in fatal crashes on Thanksgiving Eve.

**Sobering Statistics**

* Approximately one-third of fatalities in motor vehicle traffic crashes in the United States involve drunk drivers (with BACs at or above .08 g/dL). In 2021, there were 13,384 people killed in drunk-driving crashes.
* Nationally, it is illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 g/dL or higher, except in Utah, where the limit is .05 g/dL.
* Although it’s illegal to drive when impaired by alcohol, in 2021, one person was killed every 39 minutes in a drunk-driving crash on our nation’s roads.
* The rate of alcohol impairment among drivers involved in fatal crashes in 2021 was 2.8 times higher at night than during the day.
* Males are more likely than females to be driving drunk when involved in fatal crashes. In 2021, 22% of males were drunk, compared to 17% of females.
* **[Local holiday season statistic if available.]**

**The Cost of Drunk Driving**

* The financial impact from impaired-driving crashes is devastating: Based on 2019 numbers (the most recent year for which cost data is available), alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes cost the United States $57 billion annually.
* Drinking and driving is a risk no one should take. Doing so can cause injury or death to the driver, passengers, and others on the road. The consequences of drunk driving could be life-altering.

 **Plan Ahead for a Safe Celebration**

* Always drive 100% sober. Even one alcoholic beverage could be one too many.
* Make a plan: Before you have even one drink, designate a sober driver to get you home safely. If you wait until you’ve been drinking to make this decision, you might not make the best one.
* You have options to get home safely: designate a sober driver or call a taxi or rideshare. Getting home safely is always worth it. Some communities even have a sober ride program **[insert local sober ride details here].**
* If it’s your turn to be the designated driver, take your job seriously and don’t drink.
* If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact **[Local Law Enforcement].**
* If you have a friend who is about to drink and drive, take the keys away and let a sober driver get your friend home safely.

Always remember: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. For more information, visit [www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/buzzed-driving-drunk-driving/blackout-wednesday](https://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/get-materials/drunk-driving/buzzed-driving-drunk-driving/blackout-wednesday).