



Unfortunately,  
even a princess  
isn't safe with  
a drunk driver

# 101 Critical Days of Summer

## Safety Tip #14 - Drinking & Driving

In 2008, an estimated 13,846 people died in alcohol-related traffic crashes—an average of one every 30 minutes and nonfatally injure someone every two minutes (NHTSA 2008). On average someone is killed by a drunk driver every **38 minutes**.

It's not a question of whether you are legally intoxicated; it's a question of whether or not it is safe to drive when you have consumed any amount of alcohol. Research shows that impairment begins long before a person reaches the blood alcohol concentration level of .08. **Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving!!!!**



### PROTECT YOURSELF

While society has done much to improve highway safety, you can do much to protect yourself.

Don't drink and drive and don't ride with anyone who has too much to drink. Remember, it is usually themselves and their passengers who are harmed by drunk drivers.

If you drink, be responsible. When with a group, choose a designated driver. Having one person agree to drink only non-alcoholic beverages and provide transportation for other members of the group can save lives.

**Hosting a barbecue/party at your place? As a host, here are some things you can do to ensure responsible drinking at a social function:**

- Provide plenty of non-alcoholic beverages.
- **Do not** pressure guests to drink.
- Serve food to slow the rate of absorption of alcohol.
- Stop serving alcohol at least one hour before the party is over.
- If guests drink too much, call a cab or arrange a ride with a sober driver.



### How to detect a drunk driver

According to law enforcement officials, drivers under the influence of alcohol often display certain characteristics, which can include:

- ✚ Making wide turns
- ✚ Weaving, swerving, drifting or straddling the center line.
- ✚ Almost striking an object or vehicle
- ✚ Driving on the wrong side of the road
- ✚ Driving at a very slow speed
- ✚ Stopping without cause
- ✚ Braking erratically
- ✚ Responding slowly to traffic signals
- ✚ Turning abruptly or illegally
- ✚ Driving after dark with headlights off.



**For Parents - Be a good example: don't drink and drive.** Remind your children to call you if they're ever in an uncomfortable situation. Teach them **never** to get in a car with someone who's been drinking.

### Providing Alcohol to Minors

Furnishing alcohol to someone under 21 can lead to a fine and possible jail time.



### Slower Reaction Time

For the person who is drinking, the above impairments may be hardly noticeable at the time, but the slow reaction times that they can produce could prove fatal in an emergency driving situation. That's why it is not a good idea to drive no matter how much or how little that you have had to drink.

There is another consideration: Alcohol affects people differently. Some people have a higher response to drinking alcohol than others. In other words, people with a high response to alcohol can experience signs of impairment at the .02 BAC level that others do not experience until the .05 level.

### The Safe Limit

In some states drivers can be arrested for driving while impaired even if their blood alcohol concentration is lower than the legal limit, if the law enforcement officer believes he has probable cause based on the behavior and reactions of the driver.

It's simply not a wise choice to get behind the wheel no matter how much you have had to drink. **The only safe driving limit is .00 percent.**

### What's the quickest way to sober up?

The only way to reduce your BAC after drinking is to wait for your body to metabolize (eliminate) the alcohol – and that takes several hours. Your body metabolizes about one drink each hour. Coffee will not sober you up. Neither will a walk or a cold shower. They may make you feel more awake, but you will be just as impaired, and it will be just as dangerous for you to drive.

Do the Virtual Bar – Blood Alcohol Educator - <http://www.baecdrom.org/>  
Definition of "Impaired" - <http://alcoholism.about.com/od/dui/a/impaired.htm>  
For those with teenagers –  
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/alcohol/PartiesRock/index.html>  
For those who travel on international roads -  
<http://www.who.int/roadsafety/projects/manuals/alcohol/en/index.html>



**Be safe this weekend and let's close out the 101 Critical Days of Summer without any mishaps this weekend!!!**

**Have a great Labor Day Weekend - Your Risk Management Staff!!!**



**This document was derived from multiple sources. Sources are available upon request in the 157 ARW/SE Office.**