



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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As the Holiday Season is upon us, everyone looks forward to Christmas parties, workplace socials, and brining in the New Year with a “few drinks.”

What they don't foresee, however, are the consequences they face when they leave those parties inebriated and get behind the wheel of a car. Unfortunately, drink driving is more frequent during the holiday season. People get together to eat, drink and enjoy the holiday season, yet forget to monitor their alcohol intake or appoint a designated driver.

"Driving under the influence is an easily preventable phenomenon," says Joan West-Dacres, Executive Director of the National Drug Council. "When you go to a social and have to drive yourself home, take responsibility—limit how much you drink, or find someone to give you a ride. It's really as simple as that."

Many people think that driving drunk or even just "buzzed" is harmless. However, it is this same sort of thinking that has led to:

- Alcohol-related traffic accidents
- Deaths caused by drunk drivers
- Arrest for DUI's

There are several laws aimed at combating the DUI epidemic; aggressively enforced blood alcohol concentration limits, driver's license suspensions, sobriety checkpoints and community-based approaches have all proven effective in stemming the DUI problem—but not eradicating it.

In addition to the activity by the Traffic Department and Cayman Islands Road Safety Advisory Council (CIRSAC) we want to remind people of the danger and consequences of drink driving.

Many persons will drink and drive this holiday season - risking a crash, being stopped by the police or risking someone's life. Most of these admit it's because they don't want to pay for taxis or they feel it's safe to drive or that they have done it before and made it home safely.

Drink driving guidelines insist even the smallest amount of alcohol can impair a driver's performance behind the wheel.

Despite consistent campaigns to reduce the numbers of those who drink and drive, there are clearly large numbers of risk-takers who are prepared to put other drivers' and pedestrians' lives in danger. Even more worrying, are the avoidance myths that drivers believe will sober them up.

- Many think if they eat something before they get behind the wheel they will be safe and sober up.
- Many rely on a cold shower to sober up
- Many rely on strong black coffee
- Many rely on drinking plenty of water

This Christmas we are reminding people that a 12 oz bottle of beer, a small glass of wine or 1oz of spirits is equal to one standard drink, and one standard drink

takes on average one hour to leave your system. There are lots of myths out there about sobering strategies. The only truthful sobering strategy is “**time**”.

So please remember, accidents caused by drinking and driving are avoidable. Moreover, drinking and driving carries severe legal penalties. Therefore, seriously consider appointing a designated driver or finding an alternative mode of transportation before heading out for a holiday drink.

For more information on *The Facts of Drinking and Driving* contact the National Drug Council at 949-9000.

Visit our website at www.ndc.ky for information about the National Drug Council.