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SFPD DUI Patrols for Cinco De Mayo Weekend

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San Francisco Police and Avoid the 8 DUI Task Force coordinator is urging motorists to plan a safe ride home and never get behind the wheel drunk or drugged. During this holiday police agencies and CHP throughout San Francisco County will be on high alert, cracking down on drunk drivers as part of its Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over public safety campaign.

"With Cinco de Mayo celebrations occurring across the country, alcohol-impaired crashes, injuries and fatalities have risen," said San Francisco Police Traffic Company Captain Denise Flaherty. "Buzzed driving is drunk driving, and is never safe or acceptable. So folks should plan ahead now to avoid the temptation on the big day."

The Avoid the 8 DUI Task Force will be deploying special roving DUI patrols and DUI Checkpoint city location this Cinco de Mayo weekend in several communities throughout the area, looking to stop and arrest drivers who are impaired by alcohol or drugs. These DUI patrols and checkpoint are, in addition to regularly scheduled patrol officers, all looking for the tell-tale signs of an impaired driver behind the wheel.

The Avoid the 8 DUI Task Force will conduct a citywide DUI Saturation Patrol on Friday, May 3rd from 7:00 P.M. to 3:00 A.M. We will also have a DUI Checkpoint on Saturday, May 4th from 7:00 P.M. to 3:00 A.M.

From 2007 to 2011, 38 percent of all motor vehicle fatalities that occurred each year around May 5th involved impaired drivers or motorcycle operators with blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) of .08 and above, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

During the 2011 Cinco de Mayo holiday alone, 35 percent of motor vehicle fatalities involved an alcohol-impaired driver or motorcycle operator with a BAC of .08 and above. A disturbing 80 percent of the alcohol impaired fatalities involved a driver or motorcycle operator with nearly twice the legal limit, showing a BAC of .15.

The Avoid the 8 Task Force recommends the following easy steps to have a safe and happy Cinco de Mayo weekend:

- Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin.
- Before drinking, designate a sober driver and leave your car keys at home.
- If you're impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation to get home safely.

- Use your community's sober ride program
- Report Drunk Drivers - Call 911.

And remember, if you know someone who is about to drive a car or ride a motorcycle while impaired, take the keys and help that person make other arrangements to get to where he or she is going safely.

The Task Force is funded through a grant by the California Office of Traffic Safety through the national Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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