



M E L R O S E
S U B S T A N C E A B U S E
P R E V E N T I O N C O A L I T I O N

buzzed
driving is
drunk
driving
designate a sober driver

Drive Responsibly this Fourth of July!
Designate a Sober Driver Before the Party Begins

The Melrose Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, Melrose Health Department, and Melrose Police Department are urging the public to help keep the streets safe this 4th of July by drinking responsibly and designating a sober driver before heading out.

In 2007, national statistics show that 34 percent of all drivers involved in traffic-related crashes during the July 4th holiday period had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08, the legal limit, or higher. Additionally, there were a total of approximately 200 traffic-related fatalities.

“Too many people still fail to understand that alcohol and driving don’t mix. Impaired driving is no accident—nor is it a victimless crime. It’s obvious to recognize someone who’s had way too much to drink to drive safely. But what about those who have had just a few too many? You don’t have to be ‘falling down drunk’ to be a threat to yourself and others on the road,” said Police Chief Michael Lyle.

Driving impaired is simply not worth the risk. The consequences are serious and real. Not only do you risk killing yourself or someone else, but the trauma and financial costs of a crash or an arrest for driving while impaired can be significant. Violators often face jail time, the loss of their driver’s license, higher insurance rates, and other unanticipated expenses.

Kara Showers, Melrose Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition Coordinator, said much of the tragedy from drunk driving can be prevented with a few simple precautions:

If you are hosting a Fourth of July party:

- Make sure all of your guests designate their sober drivers in advance, or help arrange ride-sharing with other sober drivers.
- Serve lots of food—and include lots of non-alcoholic beverages at the party.
- Stop serving alcohol before the tail end of the night and begin serving water, coffee, and dessert.

- Keep the numbers for local cab companies handy, and take the keys away from anyone who is thinking of driving while impaired.
- Remember, underage drinking is illegal. You can now be held civilly liable under the Melrose's *Social Host Liability Law* if you are a homeowner who, knowingly or not, hosts an underage drinking party.
- You can be held liable and prosecuted if someone you served alcohol to ends up as an impaired driver in a crash.

If you are attending a Fourth of July party or plan to drink at a local bar or restaurant:

- Avoid drinking too much alcohol too fast. Pace yourself—eat enough food, take breaks and alternate with non-alcoholic drinks.
- Designate your sober driver before the party begins and give that person your car keys.
- If you don't have a designated driver, ask a sober friend for a ride home. Call a cab, friend or family member to come get you or stay where you are and sleep it off until you are sober.
- Never let a friend leave your sight if you think they are about to drive while impaired.
- Always buckle up—it's still your best defense against other impaired drivers.

Remember, *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*. Designate your sober driver before the parties begin.

For more information, please visit www.StopImpairedDriving.org. If you want to get involved locally with substance abuse prevention, visit www.cityofmelrose.org/departments/health/SubstanceAbuse.htm.

***Kara Showers, MPH, CHES
Substance Abuse Prevention Coordinator
City of Melrose Health Dept
562 Main St
Melrose, MA 02176***