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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Orange County DUI Task Force on Special Patrols for Cinco de Mayo

SANTA ANA, CA – (May 3, 2013) – As the community celebrates Cinco de Mayo, party-goers may indulge themselves with their favorite margarita or tequila and then, unfortunately, choose to get behind the wheel. This year, the "Avoid the 38" Orange County DUI Task Force is joining with other law enforcement across the nation to encourage everyone to plan ahead this Cinco de Mayo and to never drink and drive.

Special DUI Saturation Patrols will be deployed this weekend in the cities of Anaheim, Fountain Valley, Garden Grove, Laguna Beach, Orange, and throughout the Orange County Sheriff's Department's South County area. These patrols will be looking to identify and stop suspected drunk drivers. Additionally, every routine traffic and patrol officer will be on heightened alert to help prevent another senseless tragedy.

"When people start celebrating, they often aren't thinking of how they will get home from the restaurant or a friend's house. They don't realize how much they've had to drink and make a bad choice that ends with tragic consequences," said Deputy Wayne Howard with the Sheriff's Department's Traffic Bureau. "That's why we are reminding people to play it safe, plan ahead and designate a sober driver."

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.

Death or injury are not the only consequences from impaired driving. When caught and arrested, violators often face jail time, loss of their driver's license and could pay up to \$10,000 in fees, fines, and higher insurance rates.

Funding for the Orange County DUI Task Force is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. If you see a drunk driver, call 9-1-1.



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