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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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St. Patrick's Day DUI Enforcement Throughout Orange County

SANTA ANA, California (March 15, 2013) – As St. Patrick's Day approaches, the Orange County 'Avoid the 38' DUI Task Force is urging motorists to plan a safe ride home and never get behind the wheel drunk or drugged. During this holiday period, law enforcement agencies throughout Orange County will be on high alert, cracking down on drunk drivers as part of its *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over* public safety campaign.

"Drunk driving is dangerous, deadly and against the law – and it will not be tolerated in our communities this St. Patrick's Day," said Deputy Wayne Howard with the Orange County Sheriff's Department's Traffic Bureau. "Today we are warning to everyone traveling in Orange County that law enforcement officers will be out on patrol and if you are caught driving drunk, you will be arrested."

The Orange County DUI Task Force, which is comprised of 38 law enforcement agencies in Orange County, will be deploying special roving DUI patrols this St. Patrick's Day weekend in several communities, looking to stop and arrest drivers who are impaired by alcohol or drugs. These DUI patrols are in addition to regularly scheduled patrol officers.

From 2006 to 2010, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that over 700 people were killed nationwide in crashes involving drunk drivers during St. Patrick's Day holidays. On average, every 51 minutes a person is killed in a drunk-driving crash in the United States and the majority of these crashes involve drivers who have a .15% blood alcohol content or higher, almost twice the legal limit of .08%.

The DUI Task Force recommends the following easy steps to have a safe and happy St. Patrick's Day:

- 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.
- Report Drunk Drivers - Call 9-1-1.
- 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.

These enforcement efforts are funded by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

