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NEWS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**SUBJECT: Plan a Sober Ride this Holiday Season
Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving**

[Waller County, TX] – This holiday season, **Waller County, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension** is teaming up with the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the *Watch UR BAC* program to remind all drivers about the dangers of drinking and driving. With the holiday festivities and extra office parties taking place, it’s essential to plan a sober ride home before ever leaving for the event. This holiday, as you head out for a night of merrymaking, remember: *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*.

“The holidays should be a time for celebrations and for making memories, not a time of nightmares for families,” said Waller County Agent Amanda Shortt. “Unfortunately, alcohol at many holiday events contributes to the number of impaired drivers on our roadways. Help us spread the message: Even one drink is one drink too many. If you feel buzzed, you are already drunk.”

According to NHTSA, Texas lost 1,438 people in alcohol impaired driving crashes, which is 38 percent of all the crashes that occurred. The holidays prove to be extra dangerous to drivers, as more people —drivers and pedestrians alike — are out on the roads.

“We want to keep our roads safe this holiday season and help people understand that the only time they should be behind the wheel is when they are sober,” said Waller County Agent Amanda Shortt. “Alcohol affects people differently, and you do not have to be feeling or acting drunk to be too impaired to drive.”

Drinking and driving should never be combined. It’s essential to plan a sober ride in advance if the holiday celebration will include alcohol. The alternative could change your life, not to mention the lives of your passengers, or of other pedestrians or drivers and passengers nearby. This holiday season, Waller County AgriLife and *Watch UR BAC* urge drivers to designate a sober driver before heading out for the evening. If you plan on drinking, plan on not driving. Remember these tips for a safe night on the roads:

- First: Plan ahead. You know whether you’ll attend a party, therefore if you plan to drink, plan for a sober driver to take you home. Is it your turn to be the designated driver? Take that role seriously — your friends are relying on you.

- Remember that it is never okay to drink and drive. Even if you've only had one alcoholic beverage, designate a sober driver or plan to use public transportation to get home safely.
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, contact the Waller County Sheriff's Office.
- See someone who is about to drink and drive? Take the keys away and decide to get them home safely. Don't worry about offending someone, they'll thank you later.

Remember to play it safe this holiday season and always plan your sober ride before the festivities begin. If you are buzzed, do not drive — *Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving*.

For more information on food safety tailgating or picnicking, contact your local Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agent Amanda Shortt at: [846 6th Street, Hempstead, TX 77445](https://www.google.com/maps/place/846+6th+Street,+Hempstead,+TX+77445) or 979-826-7651.

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Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service

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Cooperating.*