



## VISALIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

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\*\*\*NEWS RELEASE\*\*\*

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### **Be the MVP of Safe and Responsible Driving on Super Bowl Sunday**

*Driving Drunk Is a No-Win Situation*

VISALIA, CA – As one of America’s most anticipated and celebrated sporting events, the Super Bowl brings together families, friends and fans each year to enjoy the excitement of the big game. In many instances, fans will gather to watch the game at sports bars, restaurants or Super Bowl-themed parties. The California Office of Traffic Safety, along with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), National Football League and TEAM (Techniques for Effective Alcohol Management), have joined forces with law enforcement in the Avoid the 18 – Tulare and Kings County DUI Task Force to spread an important safety message to the public about designating a sober driver on Super Bowl Sunday – Fans Don’t Let Fans Drive Drunk.

“Before choosing to drink, choose a sober designated driver. Avoid the unsportsmanlike conduct of driving drunk by handing off your keys so that you, your passengers and everyone on our roads can safely arrive home,” said Sergeant Chris McLain, Visalia Police Department. “Drunk driving is always preventable, and driving drunk could result in seriously injuring or killing yourself or someone else. Motorists can expect Police, Sheriff and CHP to have a visible presence and to stop anyone who makes the dangerous decision to drink and drive.”

The Avoid the 18 DUI Task Force will be deploying special roving DUI patrols on Sunday, February 3rd in several communities throughout the area looking to stop and arrest drivers who are impaired by alcohol or drugs. These DUI patrols are, in addition to regularly scheduled patrol officers, all looking for the tell-tale signs of an intoxicated driver behind the wheel.

In California, 774 people were killed in DUI crashes, with over 24,000 injured. These drunk-driving fatalities accounted for 29 percent of the total motor vehicle traffic fatalities in California. In addition, alcohol impairment among drivers involved in fatal crashes was almost twice as high during the weekend (31%) than during weekdays (16%) and four times higher at night (37%) than during the day (9%), according to NHTSA.

“We want everyone to make the right decision on Super Bowl Sunday,” said Chris Murphy, Director of the Californian Office of Traffic Safety. “Game planning a sober driver is the best bet possible. It’s everyone’s call to make this year’s Super Bowl Sunday safe.”



The Avoid DUI Patrols are funded by the California Office of Traffic Safety who reminds everyone to Report Drunk Drivers – Call 9-1-1!

**If you're attending a Super Bowl party or watching the game at a sports bar or restaurant:**

- Designate your sober driver before the party begins.
- Avoid drinking too much alcohol too fast. Pace yourself. Eat plenty of food, take breaks, and alternate with non-alcoholic drinks.
- 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 and get you; or if possible stay where you are for the night and don't drive until you are sober.
- or enter [www.ruok2drive.com](http://www.ruok2drive.com) in your smartphone's browser for the OTS Cab Finder.
- Never let friends drive drunk. Arrange a safe way for them to get home.
- Always buckle up. It's still your best defense against other drunk drivers.

**If you're hosting a Super Bowl party:**

- Make sure all of your guests designate their sober drivers in advance, or help arrange ride-sharing with sober drivers.
- Serve plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages at the party.
- Host your party just like they do at the stadium. Stop serving alcohol at the end of the third quarter of the game. The fourth quarter is perfect for serving coffee and dessert.
- Keep the phone numbers of local cab companies on hand and take the keys away from anyone who is thinking of driving drunk.
- Remember, you can be held liable and prosecuted if someone you served ends up in a drunk-driving crash.
- If an underage person drinks and drives, the parent may be legally liable for any damage, injury or death caused by the underage driver.
- Likewise, parents or other adults who provide alcohol to, or host a party where alcohol is available to, those under age 21 could face jail time.

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