



# GLENDALE HEIGHTS POLICE DEPARTMENT

300 CIVIC CENTER PLAZA  
GLENDALE HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS 60139-2613  
ADMINISTRATION (630) 260-6000  
FAX: (630) 260-0078



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **For Information Contact:**

**Sergeant Rhonda Kirstein**

**630.260.6070**

**[rkirstein@glendaleheights.org](mailto:rkirstein@glendaleheights.org)**

### **Before You Hit the Road This Thanksgiving: Buckle Up and Designate a Sober Driver**

**Glendale Heights, IL** – As millions of families travel to celebrate Thanksgiving, it's crucial to remember to buckle up and not drive impaired. The Illinois Department of Transportation reports that 17 roadway deaths occurred in Illinois over the 2015 holiday weekend. Many deaths and injuries could have been prevented with the click of a seat belt or the choice to designate a sober driver.

The Glendale Heights Police Department is joining in this national effort along with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT), the Illinois State Police (ISP), and local law enforcement agencies across the state to save more lives by strongly enforcing seat belt and impaired driving laws.

"Around half of the drivers and passengers being killed in crashes are not wearing their seat belts. Impaired drivers are even less likely to buckle up," said Sergeant Rhonda Kirstein. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 49 percent of occupants killed in crashes are unbelted.

"Whether you're going across town or across the state this Thanksgiving, please make sure everyone in the vehicle is wearing their seat belt. By law in Illinois, everyone must wear a seat belt no matter what seating position," said Sergeant Kirstein. "Our officers are prepared to ticket anyone who is not wearing a seat belt and arrest those choosing to drive impaired."

Statistics show that nighttime driving comes with an increased risk for a crash that could result in injury or death. Evening hours account for a higher percentage of alcohol-related crashes, a higher percentage of fatalities, and a lower percentage of occupants wearing seat belts.

Seat belts saved the lives of more than 12,500 passenger vehicle occupants age 5 and older nationwide in 2013 according to NHTSA. Buckle up and encourage your loved ones to do the same. You will save the cost of a ticket and may even save a life.

#### *Our Mission*

*"Working in partnership with our community to maintain safe and secure neighborhoods, reduce crime, and improve the quality of life for our citizens through ethical, courteous and professional police service."*

If you do celebrate with alcohol, make sure to designate a sober driver. "Our goal is to save lives and keep travelers safe this holiday and always, so we will be out enforcing these laws, day and night," said Sergeant Kirstein. "Driving Zero Fatalities to a Reality' is a mission we fully support."

For more information about the "Click It or Ticket" or "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" campaigns, visit [www.idot.illinois.gov](http://www.idot.illinois.gov).

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