



# Town of Ponce Inlet POLICE DEPARTMENT



Frank Fabrizio ★ Police Chief

## Press Release

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Immediate Release

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## **This Labor Day, Remember: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over***

### **Ponce Inlet Police Department Shows Zero Tolerance In Its Goal to End Drunk Driving**

This Labor Day weekend, families and friends will be celebrating the end of the summer. Sadly, this festive time has also become a dangerous time for America's roads, as many drunk drivers get behind the wheel after celebrating. For this reason, **the Ponce Inlet Police Department** is partnering with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to stop drunk drivers and help save lives. The high-visibility national enforcement campaign, *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*, runs August 19-September 5, 2016. During this period, local law enforcement will show zero tolerance for drunk driving. Increased state and national messaging about the dangers of driving drunk, coupled with sobriety checkpoints and increased officers on the road, aim to drastically reduce drunk driving on our nation's roads.

According to NHTSA, on average, over 10,000 people died each year (2010 to 2014) in drunk-driving crashes. During the 2014 Labor Day holiday weekend (6 p.m. August 29 – 5:59 a.m. September 2), 40 percent of the fatalities in traffic crashes involved drunk drivers, which was the highest percentage over the five years 2010 to 2014. And nighttime proves to be the most dangerous time to be out on the roads: During the 2014 Labor Day holiday period, 83 percent of drunk-driving crash fatalities occurred between 6 p.m. and 5:59 a.m. – as compared to half of all drunk-driving crash fatalities throughout the rest of that year.

Additionally, 40 percent of crash fatalities on Labor Day weekend in 2014 involved drunk drivers (with blood alcohol concentrations [BACs] of .08 or higher), amounting to 162 lives lost. And we're not just talking about a little bit of alcohol, either. More than a quarter (28%) of the crash fatalities that occurred on Labor Day weekend involved drivers with BACs of .15 or higher—almost twice the illegal limit.

“People need to understand that drunk driving is not only deadly, but it is illegal,” said **Chief Frank Fabrizio**. “Drunk driving is a massive problem in the United States, with more than 10,000 people dying annually. Drivers need to pay attention to their own driving, but also to others on the road who could be driving drunk,” **he** added. “It *is* your business. If you think you see a drunk driver, call us and let us know.”

The reality is that people aren’t invincible. Of the 9,967 people who were killed in impaired-driving crashes in 2014, 64 percent were the drunk drivers themselves. Those 6,391 drunk drivers thought they would make it to their destinations, but they didn’t.

“There are people who like to pretend that certain laws don’t apply to them, but just to be clear: in every state, for every person, it is illegal to drive with a BAC of .08 or higher,” said **Chief Fabrizio**. During the enforcement period, there will be a special emphasis on drunk-driving enforcement. Local drivers should expect to see more patrol vehicles, sobriety checkpoints, and increased messaging about the dangers of drunk driving. “This is an unacceptable problem. Drunk driving is selfish and dangerous. We want to increase awareness with this campaign, but also see lasting results of decreased drunk driving,” **he** said.

“This is important to remember: do not trust yourself when you drink,” said **Chief Fabrizio**. “You may think you aren’t drunk, but law enforcement will know you are. Law enforcement officers’ skills in detecting and identifying drunk drivers have never been better. They will spot you and arrest you.”

“Please, please: plan ahead before you go out,” said **Chief Fabrizio**. “Designate a sober driver or call a cab. But whatever you do, do not drink and drive.” NHTSA has made it even easier to get home safely when you’ve been drinking, with the free SaferRide mobile app, available through iTunes and Google Play. The app allows you to call pre-selected contacts or a taxi, and also identifies your location so you can be picked up.

This August, and every day, remember: there is never an excuse to drink and drive. If you choose to break the law, **Ponce Inlet Police** will see you before you see them.  
*Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.*

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