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**St. Patrick's Day Press Release**

Every year around St. Patrick's Day the Rome Police Department and other agencies throughout the country urge the public to designate a sober driver for their festivities. This year is no exception. The Rome Police Department Selective Enforcement Unit will be increasing its DUI patrols on Friday, March 12<sup>th</sup> through Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> during peak travel times leading up to the holiday. The goal of this period of high visibility enforcement is to remove dangerous drivers from our streets and to promote safe driving behavior.

Staying safe during parties and festivities is not just about designating a sober driver. Anytime you are on the road, you may be at risk of injury at the hands of others who are not making good decisions. In order to protect yourself, wear a seatbelt at all times, be a defensive driver, and avoid dangerous roads at night.

If you are a pedestrian, please be aware of your surroundings. A driver does not need to be impaired to have difficulty seeing a pedestrian on the roadway at night. This is particularly true if the pedestrian is impaired, which can often lead to walking, sitting or resting in an area of the road that is unsafe. Wearing reflectors and identification will help keep you safe as a pedestrian. Stick to the sidewalks and crosswalks, and do not cross the street illegally.

St. Patrick's Day is one of the most widely celebrated saint's days in the world, but all too often it shares that great distinction with a far worse one - too many people are driving drunk and killing or injuring themselves and others on the road as a result. Even if you think you've had only a few drinks and are just feeling "buzzed," don't kid yourself. Buzzed driving is drunk driving.

You can follow a few easy steps for a safe St. Patrick's Day:

1. Plan a safe way home before the festivities begin and designate a sober driver.
2. If you happen to see a drunk driver on the road, don't hesitate to report them - call 911!
3. If you know people who are about to drive while impaired, please help them make other arrangements to get to where they are going safely.

**(END RELEASE)**



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