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## **Celebrate the festive season responsibly**

### **Advance planning key to help ensure guests don't drink and drive**

Edmonton... At this time of year, many Albertans are hosting festive celebrations for family and friends. Whether you are the host or the guest, advance planning is necessary to ensure everyone returns home safely.

Here are some tips to follow:

- Establish the rule that no one drives away under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Plan activities to make sure that drinking is not the principal activity.
- Serve alternative beverages - provide non-alcoholic drinks for guests who want them. Encourage guests who are drinking alcohol to alternate alcoholic beverages with non-alcoholic alternatives.
- Don't push drinks - guests may not wish to appear rude and may accept drinks they don't want.
- Measure every drink - guests are less likely to drink to excess if they can accurately keep track of the amount that they have had to drink. Use a measurer to pour drinks.
- Serve high protein food - this type of food will stay in the stomach longer and slow the rate at which the body absorbs alcohol.

Responsible hosts must promote safe rides home for their guests. Here are some ideas for ensuring guests don't drink and drive: Appoint designated drivers, offer alternate modes of transportation home, or create a key drop system, where people give their keys to the host upon arrival and only get them back if they are safe to drive.

Whether socializing at private homes, licensed businesses or special events, the key is to plan ahead so everyone arrives home safely. Before heading out, plan how you will get home - either by a taxi or a designated driver who is committed to not having any alcohol all evening. Larger groups should have more than one designated driver. Make designated driving more appealing by taking turns, treating the driver to interesting or exotic non-alcoholic beverages, or by giving a small gift for excellent driver service. If you do find yourself in a situation where you need to arrange a ride home, contact Operation Red Nose or any organization that will pick you up and drive your vehicle home for you.

Don't be a risk on the road. Make the smart choice and don't drink and drive. For more information about traffic safety, contact the Traffic Safety Office at (780) 422-8839 or visit [www.saferoads.com](http://www.saferoads.com).

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