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Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association Stresses Dangers of Drunk Driving Ahead of Super Bowl

PROVIDENCE — The Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association would like to remind all residents to be responsible during the Super Bowl by not drinking and driving and to always wear a seat belt when in a vehicle.

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation reports that of the 57 reported traffic fatalities in the state during 2019 (the most recent data available), 25 involved alcohol consumption, which is nearly 44 percent.

As many people are expected to be consuming alcohol at gatherings during this year's Super Bowl, which is scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 7, the Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association, Rhode Island DOT and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration offer the following safety tips for the big game:

- **Know the rules:** It's illegal to drive with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher. There are no exceptions.
- **Play it safe:** Plan a safe ride home if drinking during the game. From buses and trains to ridesharing services and designated drivers, connect with the option that will get you home safely.
- **Be a party MVP:** Volunteer to be a designated driver. Let others know that you'll be there for them when the party is over with a safe, sober ride home.
- **Speak up:** There is no place on the road for anyone who has been drinking. If someone tries to drive after drinking, tell them to "ride the bench" until you help them find a sober ride home. If you're hosting the party, take their keys before they drink and drive.

"We realize that not as many people will be attending large Super Bowl parties this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but it is still extremely important to remember that no matter who you are with or where you watch the game, it is never acceptable to consume alcohol and get behind the wheel," said RIPCA Executive Director Sidney Wordell. "Refraining from drinking and driving could not only save your life, but the lives of others in your vehicle and the lives of everyone else on the road."

Proper Seat Belt Usage

The NHTSA also shares the following [safety tips](#) regarding the safe, responsible and proper use of seat belts:

- Buckling up is the single most effective thing you can do to protect yourself in a crash. Seat belts are the best defense against impaired, aggressive and distracted drivers. Being buckled up during a crash helps keep you safe and secure inside your vehicle; being completely ejected from a vehicle is almost always deadly.
- Air bags are designed to work with seat belts, not replace them. If you don't wear your seat belt, you could be thrown into a rapidly opening frontal air bag. Such force could injure or even kill you.
- Make sure your lap belt and shoulder belt are secured across the pelvis and rib cage, which are better able to withstand crash forces than other parts of your body. Place the shoulder belt across the middle of your chest and away from your neck. The lap belt rests across your hips, not your stomach. Never put the shoulder belt behind your back or under an arm.
- Before you buy a new car, check to see that its seat belts are a good fit for you. Ask your dealer about seat belt adjusters, which can help you get the best fit.

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A message from the Rhode Island Police Chiefs' Association

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