

# Loss Control Insights

## DRIVE SAFE, DRIVE SOBER

Drunk driving is a crime. More importantly, it is not a victimless crime. Nearly 17,000 Americans are killed and more than 700,000 are injured each year in alcohol-related traffic crashes. Drunk driving costs Americans more than \$50 billion each year in economic losses. Drunk driving is no accident.

An individual has choices - the choice to drink, the choice to drink to impairment and a choice whether or not to drive. Drunk driving fatalities, injuries, crashes and arrests can be prevented IF people will make responsible choices. The information contained in this brochure is intended to educate individuals, to encourage them to make right choices and to encourage others to make right choices. The result - our nation's roadways become safe and sober, lives are saved and hopes and dreams fulfilled. Make it a celebration you'll live to remember.

### Drunk Driving Facts

- ◆ Since the mid-1990's nearly 17,000 Americans have been killed and more than 700,000 have been injured in alcohol-related traffic crashes.
- ◆ On an average day, 46 people die in alcohol-related traffic crashes, accounting for nearly 40% of traffic deaths.
- ◆ Three out of ten Americans face the possibility of being directly involved in an alcohol-related traffic crash during their lifetime.
- ◆ Traffic crashes are the greatest single cause of death for every age group between 6 and 33 years of age.
- ◆ Nearly 80% of all occupants killed in alcohol-related traffic crashes were not wearing seat belts.
- ◆ The total economic costs for alcohol-related traffic crashes exceeds \$50 billion dollars each year.
- ◆ Each year, police arrest over 1.5 million drivers for driving under the influence of alcohol.

### Alcohol and Driving

- ◆ The three most critical skills necessary for a good, safe driver are judgment, vision and reaction.
- ◆ Alcohol is a depressant, which impairs a driver's judgment, vision and reaction.
- ◆ An individual's critical driving skills can become impaired well before reaching the illegal blood alcohol limit.
- ◆ Alcohol may have a different effect each time an driver drinks depending on whether the individual has eaten, what they have eaten, mood, metabolism, the level of fatigue, and other factors.
- ◆ A 12 oz. can of beer, a 5 oz. glass of wine and a 1 ½ oz. shot of liquor all have about the same amount of alcohol.
- ◆ The body eliminates alcohol at a rate of about one drink per hour. .
- ◆ Alcohol and driving can be a deadly mix-You might kill or injure someone in a crash; You might be arrested for and convicted of drunk driving which can result in court costs, legal fees, higher automobile insurance, fines, loss of license and even imprisonment. Please make responsible choices.

## **What Can You Do To Stop Drunk Driving?**

- ◆ Designate a driver ahead of time-A designated driver is a non-drinking driver.
- ◆ Take a cab or public transportation.
- ◆ Make a reservation and spend the night.
- ◆ Sip your drinks, consume food and alternate with non-alcoholic beverages.
- ◆ Ask your server about a ride home if you have been drinking to the point of impairment.

## **If You Are Hosting A Party**

- ◆ Encourage your guests ahead of time to designate a driver.
- ◆ Have a key basket and collect each guest's keys upon arrival. Know the condition of your guests before returning their keys at the end of the party.
- ◆ Plan activities so that the focus isn't just on drinking.
- ◆ Serve a variety of food and include non-alcoholic beverages alongside alcoholic beverages.
- ◆ If serving punch containing alcohol, mix with a non-carbonated base like a fruit juice because carbonated bases speed up the absorption of alcohol into the blood stream.
- ◆ Designate one person to serve as the bartender. This will help with the number of drinks and the amount of alcohol in each drink.
- ◆ Stop serving alcohol at least one hour (preferably 90 minutes) before the party is over. Bring out dessert, coffee and other non-alcoholic drinks.
- ◆ Be prepared to arrange for a ride home for your guests if necessary or to invite them to spend the night.

## **Spotting A Drunk Driver**

If you think you spot a drunk driver do not attempt to stop the vehicle. Follow from a safe distance, take down the license plate number and description of the vehicle, the direction in which it is traveling and report to area law enforcement officers.

- ◆ Weaving (across center lane, shoulder lane).
- ◆ Swerving.
- ◆ Almost striking a vehicle or other object.
- ◆ Unusually wide turns.
- ◆ Driving without headlights at night.
- ◆ Driving in opposing lanes or the wrong way on a one-way street.
- ◆ Slow response to traffic signals (slow start, fast stop).
- ◆ Driving substantially below the speed limit.
- ◆ Accelerating or varying speed for no reason.
- ◆ Stopping for no apparent reason.
- ◆ Appearing to be impaired.

Have a happy and safe holiday,