



Media Release

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If you drink, choose not to drive

Selwyn District Council, Police and licenced premises across the district are encouraging drivers to plan a safe ride home if they've had a few drinks this holiday season.

The organisations are participating in a Christmas-New Year drink drive campaign, and say motorists should be prepared for checkpoints and patrols anywhere, any time.

Many people believe drivers who have been drinking have a lower chance of being stopped when they drive on rural back roads, but this is not the case. Canterbury Police will be carrying out more random patrols on all Selwyn roads over the Christmas-New Year holiday period, and the booze bus will be deployed in both rural and urban areas.

"Police will be active in Selwyn operating check points and policing the roads in an effort to ensure that everyone is safe," says Senior Sergeant Pete Stills.

"Police encourage motorists to plan to have a sober driver and if utilising licensed premises in Selwyn to make use of the courtesy vehicles available."

In Selwyn district from 2011 to 2015, there were 151 crashes where alcohol was involved. These crashes resulted in 12 fatalities, 34 serious injuries and 58 minor injuries.

"In many cases when drivers are affected by alcohol, inappropriate speed and failure to wear a safety belt also contribute to the severity of the crash. Not surprisingly, most of these types of crashes occur between Friday evening and Sunday morning," says Selwyn Road Safety Coordinator Ngaire Tinning.

This years' campaign encourages drivers who drink to choose not to drive and to think about having a sober driver, using the courtesy van and sharing the designated driver duties. It also focuses on looking out for friends by discouraging them from driving after they've been drinking, and encouraging them to sleep over so they can avoid driving when drunk.

As part of the campaign, posters, coasters, bar mats and pens will be given out to hotels, taverns and other licenced premises in Selwyn in late November and early December.

"Our local hotels and taverns already do a great job with host responsibility, with almost all having courtesy vans," says Ngaire Tinning.

"Each year as part of our road safety campaign, we distribute free resources to licenced premises to encourage and support their host responsibility activities."

A large number of our sport clubs and local business have also taken up the opportunity to assist with the promotion of the campaign safety messages to their members and staff.

“We are very pleased we are able to continue to provide these free resources to local venues and truly appreciate the support they give us each year in sharing this important message,” Mrs Tinning says.

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