

Drinking Driver Makes Holiday Season Most Dangerous

RALEIGH — North Carolinians are approaching the most dangerous time of the year for highway driving — the ten days covering the Christmas/New Year's holiday season.

The reason for this is no mystery: drinking drivers.

Unless something unusual happens, safety officials expect about 2,800 accidents during this period, from which there will be 1,650 injuries, and 15 or 16 deaths. Alcohol will be the cause of at least 50 per cent of these accidents.

These projections are based on what took place during the comparable period last year.

But with it all, there is a glimmer of hope, according to Edwin Guy, director of the Governor's Highway Safety Program and former commander of the State Highway Patrol.

"The figures for this past year showed a slight improvement over those for 1980-81, and if the public is vigilant and takes action against drinking drivers, we can reduce these terrible figures further," he says.

Guy spotlights two areas in particular where

a responsible person can have a definite influence on the problem of drinkers who drive.

"First of all, anyone hosting a holiday party should watch guests closely to see that no one drinks too much. When this does happen, the next thing is to make certain that he or she does

not get behind the wheel of a car: take the keys, arrange for someone else to drive, call a taxi, or keep the person overnight.

"I know this can be a hard thing to do sometimes," says Guy, "but a true friend, and a responsible host, will do whatever is necessary to

keep a drunk from driving. It might be the kindest thing you can do for that person."

Earlier this year the GHSP announced a new program for citizens action against drinking drivers — RADD, Report All Drinking Drivers.

"The other thing a

responsible person can do when he spots an impaired driver is to call the nearest law enforcement agency, and give the officer all the information possible about the car — make, color, license number, and direction it is heading. The police will take it from there. You don't have to give

your name. Just start a report by saying, "This is a RADD call."

Teenagers who are relatively new drivers and drinkers are of special concern to law enforcement agencies, since many have not mastered either safe driving or intelligent drinking.

"Young people think that beer, which is very accessible, is less intoxicating than liquor," says Guy. "The truth is that a 12-oz. serving of 4% beer will cause a blood alcohol level of .02%, as will a 3-oz. serving of 12% wine, or a 1-oz. serving of liquor that is 45% alcohol.

Whether you drink is an individual decision, but driving while drinking concerns the entire community.

"I urge all citizens of this state to make a special effort this holiday season to reduce the number of impaired drivers on our roads and highways."



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Essence Surveys Attitudes Of Women

NEW YORK — According to a recent survey on the attitudes of black women, they are placing greater importance on improving the quality of their own lives. The study also indicates that the majority of those questioned wouldn't mind having an intimate relationship with someone from a different social background.

The findings appear in the December issue of *Essence* magazine and are based on the results of a questionnaire published in the magazine in February of this year. The editors of *Essence*, developed the survey with the assistance of clinical psychologist, Dr. Mari Saunders. More than 25,000 responses were received and they were tabulated by the marketing and research firm of Leslie A. Rifkin and Associates.

Titled "How Are You Feeling?", the survey probed readers on 41 questions covering their financial status, professional ambitions, self-image and feelings about their friends, family and future.

The results contained some unexpected answers. For example, over half of the respondents said they would feel angry if they discovered their man had been unfaithful. Yet, nearly 60 per cent said that they would react by staying together and try to deal with it. "One out of five answered that infidelity didn't matter to them. Dr. Saunders suggests that "this says that black women are more concerned with maintaining a relationship than agonizing over ego problems that often accompany such a discovery."

The survey also revealed some interesting contradictions in black women, suggesting that they are in a period of re-evaluation and transition. Over 95 per cent said they want to share the decision-making in their relationships. Yet over half of them want the man to initiate sex. More than one-third said they would have an intimate relationship with someone five or more years younger.

In questioning black women about their self-image, 50 per cent or more considered themselves to be capable, trusting, attractive, ambitious, and confident. What accounts for these positive attitudes? "Largely our history," wrote *Essence* executive editor, Audrey Edwards, (Continued on Page 16)

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