

Alcohol-Related Car Crashes More Likely on New Year's Eve Than Christmas



Fatal car crashes are more likely to be caused by alcohol on New Year's Eve, compared with Christmas, according to the National Safety Council.

Bloomberg reports between 2007 and 2011, over the New Year's holiday period—6 p.m. December 31 through 11:59 p.m. January 1—there were an average of 108 traffic deaths a day, with about 42 percent linked to alcohol. In contrast, there were 93 alcohol-related deaths between 6 p.m. December 24 and 11:59 p.m. December 25, with 35 percent linked to alcohol.

This year, the group estimates that during Christmas, there will be 105 traffic deaths and 11,200 injuries requiring a medical professional, and 156 traffic deaths and 16,700 injuries during New Year's.

"The difference between the two holidays is that everybody on New Year's Eve is going out to parties and at their parties, they're having the alcohol," Capt. Nancy Rasmussen, Chief of Public Affairs for the Florida Highway Patrol, told Bloomberg. Christmas is more of a "stay-in-the-house, do-the-family thing, so there's less drinking," she added.

Traffic deaths are more likely during the July 4, Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends than New Year's, Thanksgiving or Christmas, the article notes. These warmer-month holiday periods average 140 traffic deaths each per day.

The National Safety Council advises drivers not to get behind the wheel even if they think they're "just a little buzzed." Designate a non-drinking driver, or take a cab, and refuse to ride with an impaired driver, even if it's a friend or spouse.