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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Police Remind: Before You Celebrate—Designate

New Year's Eve is traditionally the biggest party night of the year. The Bismarck Police Department will have at least one extra officer doing special DUI enforcement on New Year's Eve. They remind you that while it "'tis the season to be jolly," don't mix drinking and driving.

If you think you will be drinking alcohol at a party or nightclub, plan to bring someone along who will be willing to do the driving. Use a designated driver, take a cab, or spend the night.

The drunk driver faces fines, suspension of driver license, and jail, as well as attorney fees and higher insurance rates. Each year people are killed or seriously injured in traffic crashes, many of which involve drivers that have been drinking.

Some sources estimate as many as half of the drivers on New Year's Eve may be alcohol impaired. If you suspect a drunk driver is behind you, turn right at the first intersection and let him pass. If you are behind one, stay a safe distance behind. If one is coming toward you, slow down, move to the right and stop if safe to do so. If you can get a vehicle description, report it to your local law enforcement agency immediately. And the best way to protect yourself from the drunk driver is by wearing your seat belt.

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If you are hosting a party, remember the party isn't over until each guest arrives home safely.

If you are serving alcoholic drinks to guests, be sure to offer them the alternative of non-alcoholic beverages, especially if they are driving home.

When serving alcoholic drinks, also have food or snacks. Food slows the rate of alcohol absorption in the stomach. High protein and carbohydrate foods, such as meats and cheeses, are especially good snacks.

Don't force guests to drink or make fun of those who prefer not to drink. Don't continue serving alcohol to anyone already tipsy.

If guests are mixing their own drinks, use standard measures such as shot glasses or jiggers. Guests may be less likely to over pour.

Have last call for alcohol about two hours before the party is over.

Make sure your guests have a safe way to get home, whether it's a designated driver or cab. Take the keys away from any guest who attempts to drive home under the influence. Let a guest who is still feeling "merry" sleep it off safely on your couch and not on the road, in the hospital or in the morgue.

Celebrate Sensibly - Have a Happy and Safe New Year!

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