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Jesse White Notes Nine Percent Decrease in Alcohol-Related Fatalities and Reminds Drivers to Be Safe This Holiday Season —Don't Drink & Drive

Secretary of State Jesse White noted that alcohol-related fatalities have decreased by nine percent from the previous year and urged motorists to continue this trend by celebrating the holiday season safely and not drinking and driving.

Recently, Illinois received a 5-star rating – the highest ranking possible by Mothers Against Drunk Driving – for the state's innovative and comprehensive efforts to combat drunk driving.

“Although I am pleased that alcohol-related deaths are decreasing, let's do all we can to prevent tragedy in our family or someone else's due to impaired driving,” White said. “Don't drink and drive.”

- In Illinois in 2010, there were 436 alcohol-related fatalities, which was 47 percent of the 927 total crash fatalities. In 2009, there were 480 alcohol-related fatalities.
- During the 2010 Christmas weekend, there were eight crash fatalities statewide, one of which was alcohol-related. There were 515 alcohol-related traffic injuries, which is approximately 17% of the 3,034 total motor vehicle crashes.
- During the 2010 New Year's weekend in Illinois, there were six crash fatalities, two of which were alcohol-related. There were 331 alcohol-related traffic injuries, which is approximately 19% of the 1,748 total motor vehicle crashes.
- Nationally in 2009, an estimated 10,839 people died in alcohol-related traffic crashes – an average of one every 48 minutes – according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. These deaths constitute 32 percent of the 33,808 total traffic fatalities.

The Secretary of State's office will join the Illinois Department of Transportation, Illinois State Police and law enforcement agencies to enforce the *Click It or Ticket* campaign to increase safety belt usage during the holiday season. Secretary of State Police will also be conducting DUI and seatbelt patrols during the holiday season, White said.

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