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**3/9/2018**

**NEWS RELEASE**

## **EL Paso Police Increase Patrols during Spring Break and Saint Patrick's Day to Stop Drunk Drivers**

*'Plan While You Can' increased enforcement effort runs until March 18*

Date/Time: Saturday, March 10, 2018 – Sunday, March 18, 2018

Location: City Wide

**El Paso, Texas** – Each year in Texas, more than half of drivers involved in deadly drunk driving crashes are between the ages of 17 and 34. As part of the Texas Department of Transportation's "Plan While You Can" campaign leading up to Spring Break, El Paso Police Department and law enforcement officers across Texas will increase DWI patrols to identify and stop impaired drivers. The campaign aims to decrease crashes and save lives by urging drivers to plan a sober ride as part of their Spring Break festivities. The increased enforcement (DWI Task Force/Traffic Units) runs through March 19, 2018.

"We encourage young people to make wise decisions during the Spring Break holiday," said Sgt. Mike Garcia, Traffic Supervisor. "Drinking and driving can severely impact the future of a young person for the rest of their life. Please plan ahead for a sober ride before the party starts. And remember, drinking under the age of 21 is illegal."

During last year's Spring Break\* in Texas, there were 410 crashes involving young drivers who were driving under the influence of alcohol. Those crashes killed 20 people and seriously injured another 48.

While drivers under the influence of alcohol risk killing or seriously injuring themselves or others, they also face up to \$17,000 in fines and fees, jail time and loss of their driver's license. A DWI could also cause loss of job and greatly limit future job potential. The El Paso Police Department and TxDOT strongly encourage everyone to plan for a sober ride before going out. Visit [SoberRides.org](http://SoberRides.org) to find alternatives to drinking and driving, such as:

- Designating a sober driver.
- Contacting a cab or ride-share service.
- Using mass transit.
- Spending the night.

*The information contained in this report represents reportable data collected from the Texas Peace Officer's Crash Report (CR-3). This information was received and processed by the department as of Feb. 6, 2018.*

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