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Make spring break memorable . . . don't drink and drive.

Students in the Burleson and Joshua school districts are on spring break March 10-14. The Burleson Police Department is joining forces with other law enforcement agencies across Texas and the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to eliminate drunk driving. The key message of the 2014 Texas Spring Break traffic safety campaign is "*DWI Hangovers Don't Go Away.*" This slogan is designed to caution young adults to think twice before they drink and drive, by reminding them of the severe and long-lasting consequences.

According to TxDOT, in 2013, out of all the DUI-alcohol crashes in Texas, over 57 percent involved drivers between the ages of 17 and 34. During the same time period, 48 percent of people killed in DUI-alcohol crashes in Texas were in the age group of 17-34. Last year, Spring Break DUI-alcohol related fatalities in Texas were up more than 23 percent compared to Texas Spring Break 2012.

"People often don't recognize the impact that one or two drinks can have on their ability to operate a vehicle," said Doug Sandifer, acting chief of the Burleson Police Department. "Alcohol slows your reaction time, reduces your ability to properly gauge speed or distance from other objects and makes it difficult to focus on the road."

The legal limit in Texas for intoxication is .08 BAC (blood or breath alcohol concentration.) However, when a law enforcement officer has probable cause, based on the driver's behavior, drivers can be arrested with a BAC below .08.

According to TxDOT, if you are under 21, it is illegal for you to drive with any detectable amount of alcohol in your system. The first time you are stopped for drinking and driving, you could face up to a \$500 fine, a 60-day driver license suspension, 20 to 40 hours of community service, and mandatory alcohol-awareness classes.

If you're 17 or older and are pulled over for drinking and driving with a blood or BAC of .08 or greater, you could face up to a \$2,000 fine, three to 180 days in jail, and a driver license suspension for 90 days to a year.

If a driver is stopped for DUI they may face up to \$17,000 in fines and fees-- an estimate based on legal fees, fines, impoundment and other costs.

"Parents need to understand that they can be held criminally and civilly responsible for the actions of their minor children if they provide alcohol to them. This community has already experienced the tragic loss of lives due to minors drinking and driving," Sandifer said.