

Eisenhower State Office Building  
700 SW Harrison  
Topeka, KS 66603



phone: 785-296-3585  
fax: 785-368-7415  
[www.ksdot.org](http://www.ksdot.org)

Julie Lorenz, Secretary

Laura Kelly, Governor

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**For more information:**

Chris Bortz, 785.296.3618, [Chris.bortz@ks.gov](mailto:Chris.bortz@ks.gov)

## **Labor Day warning - Drive sober or get pulled over** *“If You Feel Different, You Drive Different. Drive High, Get a DUI”*

TOPEKA – Summer may be coming to an end, but there’s no end in sight to law enforcement’s crackdown on impaired driving. This Labor Day holiday, the Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) urges drivers to think twice before driving drunk or high.

Enforcement for the national impaired driving campaign, “If You Feel Different, You Drive Different. Drive High, Get a DUI,” is from Friday, Aug. 20, through Monday, Sept. 6. KDOT is working to reduce sobering statistics involving driving drunk or high. In 2019, almost 20% of all Kansas traffic fatalities were alcohol related. In a recent survey, 31% of Kansas motorists thought it was acceptable to drive one hour after using marijuana. For the record, it’s not.

“It doesn’t matter what term you use,” said Secretary Julie Lorenz. “If you feel different, you drive different - an impaired person should never get behind the wheel.”

KDOT, along with officials from the Kansas Highway Patrol and the Wyandotte County District Attorney’s office, have partnered to spread the word about the Labor Day increase in impaired driving crashes and fatalities. A news conference will take place at the Capitol in Topeka at 10 a.m. on Aug. 18 to kick off the safety campaign and upcoming law enforcement mobilization.

Nationally, during the 2019 Labor Day holiday period, 38% of fatalities in traffic crashes involved a drunk driver. According to NHTSA, the presence of marijuana had nearly doubled for those drivers killed in crashes between 2009 and 2018.

“An alcohol-related crash happens every four hours in Kansas,” said KDOT Traffic Safety Program Manager Chris Bortz. “The consequences are real and cannot be undone. Play it safe.”

Whether a drug is legal or not, drug-impaired driving poses a threat to the driver, passengers and other road users. For example, studies have shown that marijuana use can slow reaction

times, impair cognitive performance and make it more difficult for drivers to keep a steady position in their lane.

Law enforcement officers will be out in force this Labor Day holiday. When convicted for impaired driving, drivers face stiff penalties, including hefty financial consequences – from fines, legal fees and lost time at work to jail time. Bottom line - if you are impaired, don't drive. Designate a sober driver, take public transportation or stay home.

The “If You Feel Different, You Drive Different. Drive High, Get a DUI” campaign is funded by the U.S. DOT’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) with safety funds administered by KDOT. Please drive responsibility. For more information about impaired driving, visit [www.KTSRO.org](http://www.KTSRO.org).

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