

# The Red Light Alert

## Tying A Red Ribbon On For Safety

From the Capitol in Lansing to all parts of the state, red ribbons are on the move, tied onto vehicles reminding everyone to not drink and drive.

### Red Ribbon Campaign

On December 8, Mothers Against Drunk Driving kicked off its 17th annual Red Ribbon Public Awareness Campaign at the Capital rotunda. "Tie One On For Safety," a holiday safe and sober driving campaign is in support of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) "You Drink and Drive. You Lose" Law Enforcement Mobilization. These two campaigns work together to save lives. NHTSA's mobilization starts December 19<sup>th</sup> and runs through January 4<sup>th</sup>.

MADD's potentially life-saving traffic safety initiative encourages drivers to tie on a red ribbon to a visible

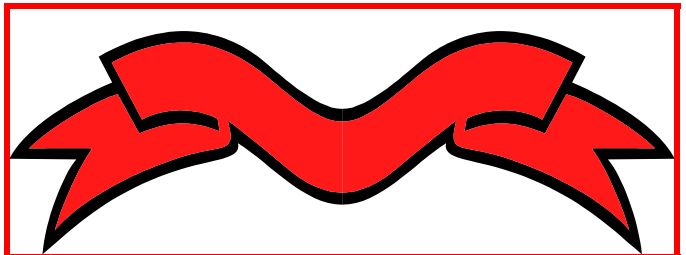
place on their automobile as a symbol of their personal decision to drive sober and to remind other drivers to do the same.

Well over 100 MADD supporters, campaign sponsors, traffic safety advocates, law enforcement officers, government officials, and community representatives assembled inside the Capitol rotunda area for the press conference.

### Key Note Speaker

During the ceremony, **Yvonne Blackmond**, Director of the Office of Drug Control Policy, shared how making the commitment not to drink and drive not only throughout the holiday season but also throughout the entire year would help save lives.

"The problems related to alcohol abuse that we face as a



**MADD's "Tie One On For Safety" Red Ribbon Campaign was created in 1986.**

state and as a nation eclipse all other combined substance abuse issues. The Office of Drug Control Policy along with Mothers Against Drunk Driving understand that law enforcement, treatment, education, and prevention must team together to make significant impacts on those who abuse these substances and victimize our children." Said Blackmond.

### A Ceremonial Tying

A ceremonial red ribbon tying with officials was held in front of the Capitol with Yvonne Blackmond, **Colonel Sturdivant**, and MADD representatives. At the close of the public ceremony there was a 100 plus vehicle motorcade of law enforcement, fire, emergency response and safety vehicles, followed by MADD's "red ribbon motorcade motorists." The motorcade stretched miles down Grand River Avenue heading to Meridian Mall.

"The problems related to alcohol abuse that we face as a state and as a nation eclipse all other combined substance abuse issues."

**Yvonne Blackmond**

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## DID YOU KNOW?

Nationally, 1,561 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve last year.

Alcohol and a lack of seat belt usage claimed 2,464 lives between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve last year.

Last year, 17,419 people were killed in crashes involving alcohol—an average of one every 30 minutes. An estimated half a million people are injured in alcohol related crashes each year.

Alcohol-related crashes cost the public an estimated \$114.3 billion annually—this includes an estimated \$63.2 billion lost in quality of life due to these crashes.

## MADD's Tie One On For Safety Campaign

The day's activities closed with a Memorial Tree Dedication held at Meridian Mall in honor of all of those who have been injured or killed by a drunk driver. MADD and international safety belt manufacturer Takata are teaming up this holiday season to remind Americans to drive safe and sober and to buckle up. Free ribbons are available at local MADD chapters or at Mazda dealers across the country.

### Awareness is Critical

The "Tie One On For Safety" Red Ribbon Public Awareness campaign was created in 1986 to urge Americans to drive sober during the dangerous holiday season and throughout the year.

The campaign is geared around the holiday season when more people are traveling to visit family and friends, companies are holding annual holiday parties, and individuals are holding and hosting festivities. This is a high-risk time of the year when awareness is critical.

Historically, from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day, there is a greater percentage of fatal crashes on the state and nation's roadways involving alcohol.

### What You Can Do

MADD reminds drivers that even the smallest amount of alcohol begins to compromise driving skills and decision making, so

selecting a designated driver is advised before any drinking begins. The designated driver should remain alcohol-free to provide a safe ride home.

Planning ahead is important because it's not how many drinks it takes to effect driving skills - it's how few. Alcohol-free is the safest way to be (and the surest bet) when getting behind the wheel.

For more information on participating, or to obtain a red ribbon, contact a MADD chapter or the MADD, Michigan State Office at PO Box 19341, Lansing, MI 48901, (517) 487-6233.

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