

For Immediate Release

21st December 2023

Help Keep Our Roads Safe this Christmas - 86% of the public agree that any amount of alcohol impairs your ability to drive

86% of the public agree that any amount of alcohol impairs your ability to drive*. With over 229,000 people using the Drinkaware [Drinks Calculator](#) this year alone, we know that people want to do the right thing and reduce their risk of drink driving. The Drinkaware Drinks Calculator allows anyone to input the amount and types of drinks they have consumed and receive an estimated time of how long it will take the body to process the alcohol. Sadly, during the Christmas period, we see a rise in drink driving. As the national, independent charity working to prevent and reduce alcohol misuse, Drinkaware is therefore urging the public to get the facts about drink driving and if they see someone attempting to or drink driving, don't be a bystander, step in and help keep Irish roads safe this Christmas.

In December 2022 596 people were found to be driving while intoxicated**. Drink driving can cause injuries and fatalities. In 2023, we have seen 176 lives lost on Irish roads. To assist the government's Road Safety Strategy to reduce deaths and serious injuries by 50% over the next decade***, Drinkaware are urging the public to get the facts about alcohol when celebrating this Christmas and never drink and drive.

Know the facts:

- It takes **at least one hour** to process one standard drink
- An average pint of beer equals two standard drinks. This means it will take your body two hours to process one pint of beer
- Alcohol levels continue to rise for hours after consuming the drink of choice
- The only way to remove alcohol from your system is time, no amount of food or water will speed up the process
- Neither will the common myths of showering, eating a large breakfast, coffee, energy drinks or exercise
- The processing time starts from when **the last drink is finished**.

If you're planning on having a drink when you're out:

- Leave the car at home
- Plan ahead - make sure there are alternative options such as buses, taxis or trains
- Switch to an alcohol-free alternative to ensure that you are safe to drive, don't take any unnecessary risks
- If visiting a rural area call the restaurant or pub ahead of time to see if shuttle services are available
- If staying in a hotel/B&B check with the staff for options in taking you to and from places

Drinkaware Director of Communications Chris Ó Lorcáin, commented:

“We know that the Irish public have the best of intentions and want to do the right thing. With our Drinks Calculator and the Drink Driving in Ireland page continuously in the top three most visited pages on the Drinkaware website, we can see that people want to know the facts and to keep their families and communities safe. The tragic loss of life on Irish roads this year is a trend we can all help to break by acting on the factual information provided, and following the RSA and An Garda Síochána’s advice.

This Christmas, Drinkaware invite everyone to avail of our free resources, such as our Drinks Calculator and our drink driving webpage for more information. Let’s make the festive period a safe, fun and enjoyable time for all.”

-Ends-

Notes to the editor:

About Drinkaware: Drinkaware is the national charity working to prevent and reduce alcohol misuse in Ireland, governed by an independent board and regulated by the Charities Regulator. Registered Charity Number: 20204601

* Drinkaware 2023 Barometer

** <https://www.garda.ie/en/roads-policing/statistics/roads-policing-statistics-for-2023/>

*** <https://www.rsa.ie/news-events/news/details/2022/07/13/rsa-welcomes-minister-naughton-s-announcement-to-review-fixed-charges-for-key-road-safety-offences>

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