

For Immediate Release

29th December 2023

Ring in the New Year by being Drinkaware

With 2023 coming to a close, Drinkaware, the national, independent charity working to prevent and reduce alcohol misuse, wants to remind the public about the dangers of drink driving and provide advice on how to stay safe while we ring in the New Year.

86% of the public agree that any amount of alcohol impairs your ability to drive*, and we have had over 80,000 views of Drinkaware's drink-driving laws in Ireland webpage on drinkaware.ie this year alone.

Throughout 2023, 181 lives have been lost on Irish roads due to speeding, collisions, drink/drug driving, careless & wreck less driving. This is an increase of 26 lives compared to the same period in 2022**. This trend of accidents and fatal injuries must be broken.

To assist the government's Road Safety Strategy to reduce deaths and serious injuries by 50% over the next decade***, Drinkaware urges the public to get the facts before celebrating this New Year.

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**.
- Fatigue is a contributing factor in 10-20% of road traffic collisions****

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

- Leave the car at home
- Plan ahead if visiting a place you haven't been before, 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 CEO, Dearbhla O'Brien, commented:

"This year we have seen over 229,000 visits to our Drinks Calculator results page and over 80, 000 views to our Drink Driving in Ireland's page. These figures clearly show that the Irish public want to do the right thing and get the facts about alcohol and drink driving laws in Ireland.

However, 181 people lost their lives on Irish roads in 2023 due to speeding, collisions, drink/drug driving, careless & wreckless driving. Drinkaware are urging the public to get the facts about alcohol during this New Year period. The tragic loss of life on Irish roads this year is a trend we can all help to break by acting on factual information provided and following the RSA and An Garda Síochána's advice.

Ahead of the New Year, Drinkaware invites everyone to avail of our free resources, such as our Drinks Calculator and our drink driving webpage for more information. Let's make this New Year a safe, fun, and enjoyable time for all."

-Ends-

Notes to the editor:

* The Drinkaware Barometer 2023 is a national population-based survey of 1,000 adults aged 18+ conducted by Behaviour and Attitudes in June 2022 and included a series of internationally recognised modules relating to alcohol consumption and mental health.

** <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>

**** <https://www.rsa.ie/road-safety/campaigns/driver-fatigue>

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

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