



News Release

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¡AY CARAMBA! DRINKING AND DRIVING IS NO FIESTA, SAYS AAA TIDEWATER

Alcohol Related Crashes More than Triple When Cinco de Mayo falls On a Saturday

VIRGINIA BEACH, VA (Friday, May 4, 2012) – AAA Tidewater Virginia cautions those who plan to celebrate Cinco de Mayo that drinking and driving is no fiesta. This year could prove to be a deadly one since the holiday falls on a Saturday, as many will celebrate all weekend long.

According to AAA, the last time this observance fell on a Saturday was back in 2007. That year, there were 132 alcohol-related crashes in the Commonwealth on May 5th and 6th. This is three to four times more than the number of alcohol-related crashes which occurred each year over the past four years on the holiday (37 crashes in 2011, 32 crashes in 2010, 36 crashes in 2009 and 42 crashes in 2008).

“Whether you’re meeting a friend for cervezas and margaritas at a bar or you’re attending a Cinco de Mayo fiesta, celebrate responsibly and designate a sober driver to avoid tragedy on the roads. You don’t want your party on the 5th to end in jail on the 6th,” said Georjeane Blumling, Vice President of Public Relations for AAA Tidewater Virginia. “If you don’t have a designated driver, call a cab for your ride home, or stay where you are.”

According to crash data provided by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, there were 37 alcohol-related crashes on Virginia roadways during the Cinco de Mayo holiday in 2011, resulting in 21 injuries.

To help avoid the dangers associated with drinking and driving, AAA Tidewater Virginia offers the following tips:

If you’re venturing out to bar or attending a Cinco de Mayo party, plan ahead.

- If you plan to drive, don’t drink.
- If you plan to drink, pre-select your designated driver before the party begins and give that person your car keys.
- If you don’t have a designated driver, ask a sober friend for a ride home; call a cab, friend or family member to come get you; or stay where you are and sleep it off until you are sober.
- Never let a friend leave your sight if you think they are about to drive while impaired.

If you’re hosting the party where alcohol is being served, be a responsible host.

- Have food and non-alcoholic beverages available.
- Remember that it takes 40 minutes or longer for alcohol from a drink to be absorbed.
- Take note of who’s coming, who drinks, and who drives.
- Make sure all of your guests designate their sober drivers in advance, or help arrange ride-sharing with other sober drivers.
- Stop serving alcohol at least an hour before your guests start to leave for home
- Keep the numbers for local cab companies handy, and take the keys away from anyone who is thinking of driving while impaired.

As part of North America’s largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA Tidewater Virginia provides its more than 325,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and

automotive-related services. Since its founding AAA Tidewater Virginia has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. For more information, visit AAA.com and follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/AAATWnews](https://twitter.com/AAATWnews).

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