



CAMERON COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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District Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Saenz and Rodriguez Announce Holiday DWI Press Conference

Brownsville, TX.--Cameron County, December 14-Tis the season for holiday travel. As traffic starts to buzz on local roadways, the Cameron and Hidalgo District Attorneys are warning against buzzed driving. Cameron County District Attorney Luis V. Saenz and Hidalgo County District Attorney Ricardo Rodriguez will host their first joint press conference next Monday, December 17th. They will meet with law enforcement from Cameron and Hidalgo at the county line to announce how they will be combating drunk driving through the end of the year.

Holiday Travel

This year, AAA expects that one in three Texans will hit the roads, marking a 4.4% increase from last year and breaking records. Locally, we anticipate a huge surge in traffic, especially during the time period between Saturday, December 22nd and Tuesday, January 1st. Local and state law enforcement is currently preparing for the influx by increasing patrol units, especially on highways and interstates in the area. However, additional law enforcement will also be present, especially in the overnight hours when holiday activities and parties will be winding up.

Holiday DWIs

Unfortunately, law enforcement often encounter drivers who drink and choose to get behind the wheel. Cameron County DA Luis V. Saenz and Hidalgo County DA Ricardo Rodriguez have had many discussions about how to more effectively encourage people to make responsible choices. Their goal is to convince people to designate a driver or use a transportation service, like ride sharing or taxi, to get to and from their respective events. However, for who choose to drink and drive, the consequences range from arrests and potential jail time to injuring someone or taking a life.

Offense	Charge	Potential Jail Time
First DWI with BAC <.15	Class B Misdemeanor	Up to 6 Months in County Jail
Second DWI	Class A Misdemeanor	Up to 1 Year in County Jail
Third DWI or Child in Vehicle	State Jail Felony	2-10 Years in State Jail

Cameron County Administration

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Intoxication Assault (Accident or injury while intoxicated)	Third Degree Felony	2-10 Years in Prison
Intoxication Manslaughter (Kill a person while intoxicated)	Second Degree Felony	2-20 Years in Prison

There are also associated fines, court costs, and potential license suspensions that could occur if you commit any of these offenses.

No Refusal

While the holiday also yields “No Refusal” periods for most counties across Texas, Cameron County enacts the program year round. Currently, Hidalgo County is testing “No Refusal” during Labor Day, and hopes to expand this through their 34 law enforcement agencies in the near future and to more holidays. “No Refusal” allows law enforcement to obtain a search warrant from a judge for a blood alcohol content blood draw for a suspected drunk driver if they refuse a breathalyzer. Cameron County has seen tremendous success since the inception of "No Refusal" in 2015, with over 1,000 arrests per year. While the short term goal of the initiative is to take impaired drivers off the streets, the long term goal is to deter them from repeating the mistake of drinking and driving.

Press Conference

Mr. Saenz and Mr. Rodriguez will host a press conference on Monday, December 17th at the Cameron-Hidalgo County line at Mile 3 West Rd. in Mercedes on Westbound Highway 83 (see map) at 10:00 am. They are proud to partner with all local law enforcement agencies, the Cameron County Sheriff’s Department, the Hidalgo County Sheriff’s Department and Texas DPS on this endeavor. Representatives from each will be on hand and available for interviews. Please see the attached invitation for the more details.

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For more information or to schedule your interview, please call Victoria Cisneros at (956) 509-2522 or via email.