

1 in 4 traffic deaths caused by drunk drivers

Analia Zarate of Edinburg was four years old when she and her mom were headed home from church on a Sunday night. A drunk driver ran a stop sign and hit their car, killing Analia's mom instantly. More than 20 years have passed since that tragic night, but the pain endures. "All I remember is being buckled into a car seat and waking up in a hospital a week later," Zarate said. "My mother died in the crash. I was four."

She wishes the drunk driver could see the pain he caused by taking her mother away from her. Analia's mom, Nereida Flores Garza, is just one of thousands of people killed every year by drunk drivers - 1,061 in Texas last year. Stories like this are why TxDOT is launching its *Faces of Drunk Driving* summer campaign: to show the real faces behind the statistics.

"These are real people whose deaths were 100% preventable,

had it not been for a drunk driver," said TxDOT Executive Director Marc Williams. "We hope these personal accounts from offenders and survivors wake people up to the consequences of drinking and driving. Always get a sober ride through a designated driver, taxi, rideshare app, or calling a friend - or simply stay where you are."

Last year, 24% of all traffic deaths in Texas were caused by drunk driving. That translates to an average of one person dying every eight hours and 15 minutes. In 2021, Texas saw 25,261 drunk driving related traffic crashes - an increase of 9% over 2020.

The *Faces of Drunk Driving* campaign reminds us that the human toll of a drunk driving crash devastates the lives of survivors forever. Drinking and driving can have serious physical, emotional and financial consequences that can last for years. A DWI/DUI can

be expensive and lead to legal hassles, difficulty finding or keeping a job, loss of trust from loved ones, and regret.

That's why the *Faces of Drunk Driving* campaign also includes stories from people convicted of DWI/DUI. Richie tells his story about heading home after drinking at a friend's house, losing control of his car and hitting a house. As a result, he spent 10 days in jail, was sentenced to a year probation, had to perform 150 hours of community service, pay fines and cover the costs of repairing the house. Richie says he also must face the fact that he is now a convicted felon.

This year's campaign will feature events around the state to share stories of Texans who deal with the consequences of a drunk driving crash every day of their lives. Events will include an exhibit of powerful video testimonials. Full video stories and other impaired driving information can be found at <https://www.soberrides.org/>

How farm kids spend their summer:

-  Harvesting crops
-  Baling hay
-  Cleaning out the barn
-  Riding horses
-  Gathering or sorting cattle, sheep or goats
-  Swimming in the water trough
-  Fixing things that broke

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USDA's recent observational study, 32% of participants contaminated plates and cutting boards and 12% contaminated spice containers while preparing food.

Be sure to wash hands thoroughly after handling raw meat. Any utensils that contacted raw meat must also be cleaned. Use separate plates for taking raw meat to the grill and then pulling cooked meat off the grill. USDA recommends using separate cutting boards; one for meat, and another for fruits and vegetables.

Keep Hot Foods Hot and Cold Foods Cold

Whether you're transporting food to go hiking, camping, to a

barbeque, or a picnic, the rule stays the same: keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Food is in the "Danger Zone" when it is in the temperature range of 40 F and 140 F. If in the "Danger Zone" for too long, bacteria can multiply to dangerous levels. Perishable foods (such as hamburgers, hotdogs, and chicken wings) should be discarded if left out longer than two hours, or one hour if outdoor or indoor temperatures in the area are above 90 F.

Keep cold foods at a temperature of 40 F or below by keeping food nestled in ice, in a cooler with a cold source, or refrigerated until ready to serve.

(Continued on next page)

July Fourth is for fireworks, not foodborne illness

Pull out the grill and your red, white, and blue because the Fourth of July is here. This means gatherings, outdoor festivities, and good times with family and friends. As the meat sizzles on the grill, don't let food safety fizzle out of your memory.

"Wherever you go this summer, don't forget to bring your safe food handling practices along for the adventure," said U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Deputy Under Secretary for Food Safety Sandra Eskin. "As temperatures rise, the risk for foodborne illness does too. Always remember that whether you're grilling for the Fourth of July, camping, or boating, you should wash your hands before and during food prep."

Whether you're eating at home or outdoors at a park this Fourth of July, sanitation is key to combat foodborne illness. Be sure to wash your hands and sanitize your cooking area before preparing food. Safe food handling practices also help to avoid cross-contamination. Summertime brings additional unique challenges to food safety because of the warmer temperatures. Be sure to keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold this Fourth of July, and don't forget your food thermometer.

Clean and Sanitize

Always wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before and after handling raw meat and poultry. A recent USDA study (PDF, 1.3 MB) showed that 56% of participants didn't attempt to wash their hands during meal preparation. When preparing your Fourth of July meal, don't skip this step. Remember, hand sanitizer is not as effective as handwashing, but it's better than nothing. If you're out

camping and have no access to running water, use hand sanitizer as a backup.

Wash surfaces and utensils with soap and warm water before cooking and after contact with raw meat and poultry. After cleaning surfaces that raw meat and poultry have touched, apply a commercial or homemade

sanitizing solution (1 tablespoon of liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of water). Use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.

Avoid Cross-Contamination

Cross-contamination is another risk to your summertime fun. Don't let it spoil your plans or your food. Cross-contamination can happen even when grilling or getting food prepared to grill. In



The Colorado River Municipal Water District is accepting applications for following position at Lake Spence:

Park Maintenance Technician - Responsible for general maintenance of park and facilities. Entry to intermediate level position.

For additional information, visit www.crmwd.org.

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