Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) Colorado, the Colorado Department of Transportation, Colorado State Patrol and the law firm of Bachus & Schanker are kicking off the 2011 holiday crackdown on drunk driving by calling on Colorado residents to Tie One On For Safety.

MADD's annual Tie One On For Safety campaign calls for motorists to display a red ribbon on their cars in support of law enforcement crackdown efforts and as a pledge to drive safe and sober. The campaign runs now through New Year's Day—one of the most dangerous times of the year on U.S. roads and highways. Last holiday season in Colorado, 48 people were killed in traffic crashes. More than half of those killed were not wearing seat belts, and 18 died in alcohol-related crashes.

"My heart goes out to all those whose loved ones have been killed or injured by this senseless and utterly preventable crime," says Emily Tompkins, MADD Colorado's state executive director. "During this time of year when drunk driving crashes are most prevalent, we urge Colorado residents to be extra vigilant about planning ahead for a safe way home when holiday festivities include alcohol."

To raise awareness for Tie One On For Safety, MADD is partnering with CDOT to place holiday trees bearing red ribbons and pictures of victims of drunk driving crashes at several locations in the state to remind Colorado drivers to be safe this holiday season.

"The 125 faces on this tree serve as a visual reminder of why it's so important to plan ahead with a sober designated driver," said Don Hunt, executive director of the Colorado Department of Transportation. "Choosing to drink and drive is costly and is easily preventable. An average DUI in Colorado is $10,270 and the cost of a loved one's life is priceless. We want to make sure we get that message across to everyone this holiday season."

A special Heat is On DUI crackdown begins Tuesday, Nov. 22 and continues through Monday, Nov. 28 with the Colorado State Patrol and more than 80 law enforcement agencies planning increased patrols and saturation patrols across the state.

"As our citizens start this busy travel week to be with friends and loved ones for Thanksgiving,

we ask everyone to do the right thing by planning ahead for a sober ride home," said Col. James Wolfinbarger, chief of the Colorado State Patrol. "Our troopers will be out in force over the holiday week to keep our roadways safe. Please do your part by buckling up and always having a sober designated driver. Tie a red ribbon on your keychain or your vehicle as a visual reminder to make safe choices this holiday season."

The 2011 Tie One On For Safety campaign is presented by the law firm of Bachus & Schanker. "This campaign is a great way for concerned citizens to get involved and raise awareness about the importance of safe driving during the holidays," says Darin Schanker, founding partner of Bachus & Schanker. "The law firm of Bachus & Schanker is proud to be MADD Colorado's 2011 statewide sponsor, and we join MADD Colorado in calling on people to plan ahead for a safe ride home."

MADD's Tie One On For Safety red ribbons and decals are also available at the MADD Colorado State Office and at local partners. For more information on where to get red ribbons, visit www.madd.org/co . Supporters can also text MADDCO to 27722 to donate $10 in support of MADD Colorado's programs and services.

This year, the kickoff of Tie One On For Safety also coincides with the fifth anniversary of MADD's Campaign to Eliminate Drunk Driving. In connection with the anniversary, MADD has unveiled a Report to the Nation, which rates the nation as a whole, along with each state, on its progress in implementing proven drunk driving countermeasures. For more details on the Report to the Nation, visit www.madd.org .

Holyoke Enterprise November 24, 2011