

Dec 14, 2018 14:34 GMT

Four in 10 know someone who has driven over the limit

With the Christmas party season in full swing new RAC research* has found nearly four in 10 people (37%) have friends who they believe have driven while being over the drink-drive limit.

While two-thirds (65%) of the 1,865 motorists questioned for the survey timed to coincide with the launch of the Government's [THINK! Christmas drink-drive campaign](#) believe there is more pressure in general to drink alcohol in the month of December and during the festive period, a shocking 28% were unprepared to try to talk a friend who they thought might be over the limit out of driving.

A hard-line 9%, however, say they would warn a friend not to drive otherwise they would call the police. Four in 10 (43%) would try to persuade their friend who had been drinking to take alternative transport home, and even arrange and pay for a taxi.

Only 38% of those questioned claimed to have a zero-alcohol policy when driving to a social function. Just over a quarter (27%) say they will have one small alcoholic drink, such as half a pint, shandy, small wine, small spirit mixed, followed by non-alcoholic drinks and then drive home. One in 10 (10%) could be risking being over the limit by having one large alcoholic drink, such as a pint of beer or lager, large wine or a large spirit mixed, and then non-alcoholic drinks and drive home. Two per cent say they will have two alcoholic drinks and drive home.

Looking at Christmas Day itself a fifth of those who took part in the research (21%) say they will be driving after celebrating with family or friends and, asked separately, 23% will drink alcohol before driving.

Data compiled for this year's [RAC annual Report on Motoring](#)** shows there is growing concern about those who drive under the influence of alcohol, the issue having risen from eighth to fifth in a list of 20 major driving concerns, with 27% of drivers identifying it as a major concern.

Eight in 10 motorists (81%) of the 1,808 motorists surveyed say they do not think they have driven under the influence of alcohol over the past 12 months. But worryingly, there has been a statistically significant increase in the proportion of drivers who admit in the past 12 months that they have driven shortly after drinking when they think or know they were over the legal limit, rising from 8% to 12%.

Looking at the 'morning after' drink-driving issue, 2% say they know they have broken the law in this way, while 8% believe they may have done so.

The figures also show motorists aged between 25 and 44 (24%) are more likely to admit to driving when they think or know they were over the legal limit shortly after drinking than those in other age groups, while those who live in London (32%) or in other cities (23%) also have a greater propensity to drink-drive.



[Watch video on YouTube here](#)

RAC road safety spokesperson Pete Williams said:

“Drink-driving, whether someone is just over the limit or several times above it, is unacceptable – it ruins lives. So it’s shocking to see in our research that

so many people know drivers who have got behind the wheel when they're over the limit.

“It's also sad that a sizeable proportion of those surveyed are unwilling to try to persuade a friend who's too drunk to drive, not to. But, on the other hand it's positive that 43% would sort out a cab for a friend instead of letting them drive.

“The findings of our long-term research for the Report on Motoring around drivers aged 25-44 being more likely to say they had driven while over the limit were significant, and in some cases surprising given that younger drivers under 25 are often seen as more likely to drink and drive. It is also surprising Londoners are more prone to this as city dwellers generally have better public transport alternatives to the car compared to those living in rural areas.

“We urge everyone to think twice about driving to a social function and then drinking. The best advice is not to drink at all or to arrange other transport so you can enjoy yourself without the fear and consequences of breaking the law. And, for those that have been out drinking it is also essential they ensure they are safe to drive the next day as just going to sleep for a few hours doesn't necessarily make you legally safe to drive.”

More [details of the new THINK! campaign](#) are available on the GOV.UK website

The RAC consumer website carries [information on the drink-drive limits](#)

Notes to Editors

* Research carried out online with members of the RAC Opinion Panel 19-25 November 2018

** Research for the [RAC Report on Motoring](#) was conducted by Quadrangle using an online survey of 1,808 motorists who hold a full, current driving licence, drive at least once a month and who have a motor vehicle in their household. The research was carried out from 2-18 May 2018.

About the RAC

First formed in 1897, the RAC has been looking after the needs of its members and championing the interests of drivers for more than 120 years.

Today it has more than eight million members and is one of the UK's most progressive motoring organisations, providing services for both private and business motorists. Whether it's [roadside assistance](#), [insurance](#), [buying a used car](#), [vehicle inspections and checks](#), [legal services](#) or up-to-the-minute [traffic and travel information](#) – the RAC offers a solution for all motoring needs. The RAC is committed to making motoring easier, safer, more affordable and more enjoyable for drivers and road users.

The RAC is the motorist's champion and campaigns to support the interests of its members and UK drivers at a national level. This includes voicing concerns about the increasing cost of motoring, particularly the price of fuel and the high level of tax levied on it, advancing levels of road safety, and supporting the needs of all drivers, from young to old.

The RAC's annual [Report on Motoring](#) – first published in 1989 – is one of a kind and provides a clear insight into the concerns and issues facing today's motorists.

For the very latest news on UK fuel prices, check [RAC Fuel Watch](#). It provides a comprehensive guide to the latest UK unleaded petrol and diesel prices – both at the wholesale level and at the pump - and tracks these prices daily to help drivers check if the price they pay to fill up is a fair one.

Contacts



RAC Press Office

Press Contact

press.office@rac.co.uk

Emails monitored during normal office hours. For breakdown queries, call 0330 159 0740

ISDN number on request