

## **St. Patrick's Day, DUI & Bankruptcy**

**By Arizona Bankruptcy Attorney John Skiba**

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Happy St. Patrick's Day! On my way to court this morning they were talking on the radio about how the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office will be out in full force today enforcing DUI laws. Must be some connection between St. Patrick's day and drinking? Well, on top of the numerous reasons that you shouldn't drive while impaired, you can add to the list that if you harm someone while driving drunk, any debt associated with that will be yours to keep forever – it is non-dischargeable in bankruptcy.

Under 11 U.S.C. 523(a)(9), debts incurred from the death or personal injury of another while you were driving drunk don't go away. The statute is very specific and includes being intoxicated from using alcohol, drugs, or any other substance that impairs your ability to drive. It goes one step further and itemizes the types of vehicles, which include vehicles, boats, and air planes. There is even case law out there barring the discharge of a debt incurred while someone was driving a snow mobile drunk!

Main point – don't drink and drive. Bankruptcy point – if you do drink and drive and hurt someone else, you will pay that debt for the rest of your life.

I offer a free bankruptcy consultation where we can discuss your specific situation.

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