



MEDIA RELEASE

Traffic Safety Office

Ohio Traffic Safety Office • Tina O'Grady, Administrator
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DESIGNATE A SOBER DRIVER THIS JULY 4 HOLIDAY WEEKEND

ODPS Reminds Everyone that Law Enforcement is Cracking Down on Drunk Driving

(COLUMBUS) – As many Ohioans prepare to join in the celebration of the upcoming July 4 holiday weekend, the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) reminds those taking part in festivities that law enforcement will be out in force looking for drunk and impaired drivers as part of the national *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest* crackdown.

In 2009, the July 4 holiday weekend resulted in nine fatalities on Ohio's roads. Three of those fatalities were alcohol-related, and all of them could have been avoided.

“ODPS and its partners want everyone to enjoy the holiday weekend, but strongly encourage individuals taking part in the celebrations to take the appropriate steps in advance,” said Thomas J. Stickrath, ODPS Director. “Law enforcement will be looking for impaired drivers, so it is important to remember that if you are over the limit, you will be under arrest.”

This July 4 holiday weekend, law enforcement agencies across the state will be increasing patrols, conducting sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols as well as concentrating on speed, aggressive driving and motorcycle safety. During this time, law enforcement will be logging in more than 6,000 hours of enforcement through federal grants provided by ODPS' Ohio Traffic Safety Office. The Ohio State Highway Patrol will have a visible presence on the state's highways and Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) agents will be doing compliance checks in permit establishments as well as working with local law enforcement to target over-serving and underage drinking.

Impaired driving not only increases the chances of a crash that may cause death or serious injury, but it can also lead to trauma and the financial cost of a crash or arrest. For bars and establishments, over-serving or serving underage could also mean costly fines, suspension or revocation of their liquor permit. Everyone should take these simple precautions to keep themselves and others safe before going out to celebrate:

- Designate a sober driver; have a family member or friend who knows in advance you will be calling for a ride home; or call a cab.
- If you see someone about to drive impaired, take their keys and help them find a safe alternative.
- If you see an impaired driver on the roadway, call law enforcement immediately. Call 1-877-7-PATROL on state highways.
- Always buckle up – it's still your best defense against impaired drivers.

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- Bar or establishment owners or employees with questions about over-serving or other liquor-permit related issues should contact OIU. Contact information is online at: <http://investigativeunit.ohio.gov/>. OIU offers free instruction on laws pertaining to the sale and/or consumption of alcohol and tobacco. Agents also cover topics such as false identification, employment of minors, along with penalties for those found in violation.

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ODPS works to reduce alcohol related deaths and injuries and keep Ohio's roads safe through the enforcement efforts of the Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) which enforces liquor, tobacco and food stamp laws in liquor permit premises and the Ohio State Highway Patrol which enforces traffic laws on the road. In addition to enforcement efforts, OIU also works to educate bar owners and servers about liquor laws, including over-serving. The Ohio Traffic Safety Office (OTSO) coordinates and funds the efforts of DUI Task Forces and grants for local law enforcement and safety partners to combat impaired and unsafe driving. OTSO also promotes educational programs, coalition-building efforts and campaigns focused on highway safety.