



MEDIA RELEASE

Department of Public Safety

Ohio Department of Public Safety • Thomas J. Stickrath, Director
www.publicsafety.ohio.gov



Ted Strickland, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

October 28, 2010

Contact: Julie Hinds, Public Information Officer
(614) 752-2401

PUBLIC SAFETY WORKING TOWARD A SAFE HALLOWEEN

Multiple Department Divisions Partnering with Locals to Keep Party-Goers Safe

(COLUMBUS) – Over the weekend, many college-aged adults will be traveling to Athens for the annual Halloween celebration. The Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) would like to remind revelers to enjoy the Halloween festivities, but to do so lawfully and safely.

“We understand that the Athens Halloween celebration is a tradition the entire city takes part in, and we certainly do not want to take away from the festivities,” said ODPS Director Thomas J. Stickrath. “We are working with our local partners to try to make the celebration safer for students, residents and guests alike.”

Throughout the weekend, agents with the Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) will be looking for violations related to underage alcohol activities. The agents are plain-clothed, fully-sworn peace officers. Each agent carries a badge and proper OIU identification.

During last year’s celebration, agents arrested 45 individuals for violations including the sale and furnishing beer to a minor, underage individual knowingly sharing in the cost of beer, underage persons possessing beer, disorderly conduct, and person under 21 knowingly consuming beer.

Troopers with the Ohio State Highway Patrol will be working with other law enforcement agencies patrolling the corridors leading to and from Athens with an emphasis on removing impaired drivers from the roadways. Last year, troopers arrested 19 individuals for OVI over the Halloween weekend. Fortunately, only one alcohol-related crash was reported during that same time in Athens County.

Also, according to the Ohio Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Incident Reporting System, on Oct. 31, 2009, Athens EMS responded to 17 incidents involving 18 – 24 year olds. The previous weekend Athens EMS responded only two incidents.

Following these simple tips can help ensure that everyone enjoys their Halloween celebration:

- Plan a safe way home **before** the festivities begin; designate a sober driver and give that person your keys;

-more-

Public Safety Working Toward A Safe Halloween
Page Two
October 28, 2010

- If you're impaired, use a taxi or call a sober friend or family member so you are sure to get home safely;
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, don't hesitate to contact local law enforcement or I-800-GRAB-DUI for the Highway Patrol on state highways;
- Drink Responsibly – over-serving is against the law, whether it's your bartender or your friend, know when to stop.
- Don't drink if you're not 21.

Also, please don't forget the trick-or-treaters as you are driving through Athens. Trick-or-treat is Thursday in Athens and pedestrian safety is another important part of making sure everyone has a safe, fun Halloween. As parents gear up for trick-or-treat, please remember:

- Parents need to accompany children, making sure they are visible and model safe pedestrian behavior;
- Make costumes "fall-proof." Falls are one of the leading causes of injury on Halloween night.
- Clear walkways, yards and driveways of tripping hazards in advance;
- Carry a flashlight and adhere reflector stickers to your child's costume.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, child pedestrians are four times more likely to be killed on Halloween than on any other evening of the year. Well over half of the Halloween pedestrian fatalities involving children occur at non-intersections, suggesting that mid-block crossings (children darting out from between parked cars and other unexpected crossing behaviors) may have contributed to their deaths.

###

ODPS works to reduce alcohol-related deaths and injuries on Ohio's roads through the coordinated efforts of all of its Divisions. The Ohio Investigative Unit enforces liquor, tobacco and food stamp laws in liquor permit premises and the Ohio State Highway Patrol enforces traffic laws. The Ohio Traffic Safety Office (OTSO) funds the efforts of OVI Task Forces and other grants for law enforcement to combat impaired and unsafe driving. The Division of Emergency Medical Services is responsible for the education, certification and investigation of all emergency medical service and fire service providers in the state of Ohio.