



MEDIA RELEASE

Criminal Justice Services

Ohio Criminal Justice Services • Karhlton F. Moore, Executive Director
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Ohio Hosts State's First Drug Recognition Expert Course

Specialized training will improve law enforcement detection of impaired drivers

(COLUMBUS) – Law enforcement from across Ohio recently received specialized training that will enhance their abilities to detect and arrest drugged drivers during the state's first Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) course.

Twenty officers participated in the intensive three-week course from the following agencies: Ohio State Highway Patrol; Columbus Division of Police; Summit County Sheriff's Office Franklin County Sheriff's Office; Delaware County Sheriff's Office; Westerville Division of Police; Dublin Division of Police; Brooklyn Heights Police Department; West Chester Police Department; and Brunswick Division of Police.

The first two phases of the course were held in August, and the third phase will occur in mid-October at the Maricopa County Jail in Arizona. This facility processes an average of 900 inmates per day and will provide officers the opportunity to conduct hands-on drug evaluations for all seven drug categories, which is a requirement of the course.

"I am pleased this training is being offered to our law enforcement partners," said Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) Executive Director Karhlton Moore. "This will be an invaluable resource in our fight to curb impaired driving, as well as focus on emerging issues such as the prescription drug epidemic currently affecting so many communities across Ohio."

Nationally, 18 percent of all drivers killed in crashes in 2009 tested positive for drugs, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The DRE program is a traffic-safety program that focuses on the detection, apprehension and adjudication of drug-impaired drivers. A DRE is a police officer who is highly trained to recognize impairment in drivers under the influence of drugs or a combination of drugs and alcohol. A DRE undergoes specialized training in detecting and identifying the category or categories of drugs causing the impairment. The process is based on observable signs and symptoms that are known to be reliable indicators of drug impairment. Currently, Ohio has 12 certified DREs, but this is the first time the course has been offered on a statewide level.

The DRE program, also referred to as the Drug Evaluation Classification program, began in the 1970s with the Los Angeles Police Department. The program operates under the guidelines and direction of the International Association of Chiefs of Police and is supported by NHTSA. There are more than 7,300 DREs across the nation.

The training is funded through a grant provided by NHTSA.

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A division of the Ohio Department of Public Safety, OCJS serves a wide variety of agencies committed to reducing and preventing crime across Ohio through research, technology and grants. OCJS coordinates and funds the efforts of DUI Task Forces and grants for local law enforcement and safety partners to combat impaired and unsafe driving and promotes educational programs, coalition-building efforts and campaigns focused on highway safety.