



# MEDIA RELEASE

## OHIO TRAFFIC SAFETY OFFICE

[www.highwaysafety.ohio.gov](http://www.highwaysafety.ohio.gov)



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**July 2, 2009**

**Contact:** Lindsay Komlanc, ODPS Media Relations Director (614) 752-4325

### **MAKE A SOBER DRIVER PART OF YOUR JULY 4 PLANS**

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

(COLUMBUS) – You’ve heard it all around the state from Cleveland to Cincinnati – law enforcement will be out in force looking for drunk and impaired drivers this July 4 holiday weekend as part of the national *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest* crackdown. The Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS) is sending out one last reminder that designating a sober driver before the fun begins is the best way to stay safe.

In 2008, the July 4 holiday weekend had the second-highest number of fatalities for holiday weekends on Ohio’s roads. Almost half of the 15 fatalities were alcohol-related.

“Too many people still fail to recognize that alcohol and driving don’t mix. Impaired driving is no accident, nor is it a victimless crime,” said ODPS Director Henry Guzmán. “We are working to prevent needless fatalities by asking everyone to be responsible and plan ahead to designate a sober driver.”

This July 4 holiday weekend, more than 65 law enforcement agencies will be increasing patrols, conducting sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols as well as concentrating on speed, aggressive driving and motorcycle safety. During the holiday weekend, law enforcement will be logging in more than 9,000 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.

“This is a last reminder before the holiday weekend. Make no mistake, law enforcement will be looking for impaired drivers. If you are over the limit, you’ll be under arrest,” Guzmán said.

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 follow these simple tips to keep themselves and others safe:

- 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.

**-more-**

## **Make a Sober Driver Part of Your July 4 Plans**

**July 2, 2009**

**Page Two**

- 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.
- 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.

###

*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.*