



MEDIA RELEASE

Traffic Safety Office

Ohio Traffic Safety Office • Tina O'Grady, Administrator
www.ohiohighwaysafetyoffice.ohio.gov



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DESIGNATE A SOBER DRIVER – COPS ARE CRACKING DOWN *Safety Partners Kick Off Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest. Crackdown in Ohio*

(COLUMBUS) – The message is clear: if you drive impaired, you will be caught and arrested. This year, 952 Ohio law enforcement agencies joined thousands of other law enforcement agencies and highway safety partners throughout the nation to take part in the *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest* Crackdown on impaired driving. The enforcement blitz began today and will last through Labor Day.

During the enforcement period, law enforcement partners have planned more than 7,000 enforcement hours, dozens of checkpoints and more than 1,300 hours of saturation patrols around the state.

“The seriousness of saving lives should not be taken lightly,” said Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Thomas J. Stickrath. “Today, our safety partners came together to announce initiatives and partnerships aimed at reducing deaths and to remind everyone that cops are cracking down - if you are over the limit, you will be under arrest.”

Leaders of the Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association, Ohio State Highway Patrol, the Ohio Traffic Safety Office and the Ohio Department of Public Safety also came together and announced their “Joining Forces to Save Lives” partnership, which addresses all aspects of safety on our roads.

An Ohio OVI Checkpoint Weekend also kicked off today. Law enforcement from all jurisdictions have joined together to hold more than 30 checkpoints all over the state between Aug. 20 and 22. The checkpoints are planned for those areas with the highest numbers of alcohol-related deaths, injuries and arrests. They are designed to not only deter impaired driving, but to proactively remove these dangerous drivers from our roadways.

In 2009, 390 people died in alcohol-related crashes on Ohio's roads (down from 449 in 2008 and 473 in 2007). Alcohol-impaired drivers were involved in 38.16 percent of all fatalities. Of these fatalities, there were 65 alcohol-impaired motorcycle drivers involved in fatal crashes last year.

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The national *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.* Crackdown is a program organized by the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) that focuses on combining high-visibility enforcement with heightened public awareness through advertising and publicity. It is locally administered by the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Ohio Traffic Safety Office, which funds a majority of the enforcement hours through federal funds from NHTSA.

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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. 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.