

This Labor Day, and Every Day: Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over
DUI/Drivers License Checkpoint Planned 8/24/18

As we enter the final stretch of summer spending time with friends and family, the Ventura Police Department is driving home the importance of celebrating responsibly by not driving, or riding a motorcycle, impaired.

From now until September 3, 2018, The Ventura Police Department is participating in a high-visibility national enforcement campaign, *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*. During this period, Police and Sheriff's Departments statewide, along with the California Highway Patrol, will increase the number of officers on the road to stop suspected drunk or drug impaired drivers and motorcyclists. If you are caught driving or riding impaired, you will be pulled over and arrested.

The Ventura Police Department will have a special emphasis during this mobilization to enforce all traffic violations. A DUI/Drivers License Checkpoint will be conducted on Friday 8/24/18, at an undisclosed location within the city limits between the hours of 8:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.

The deterrent effect of high visibility enforcement using both DUI checkpoints and DUI Saturation Patrols has proven to lower the number of persons killed and injured in alcohol or drug impaired crashes. Research shows that crashes involving an impaired driver can be reduced by up to 20 percent when well-publicized proactive DUI operations are conducted routinely.

DUI Checkpoints like this one are placed in locations based on collision statistics and frequency of DUI arrests, affording the greatest opportunity for achieving drunk and drugged driving deterrence. Locations are chosen with safety considerations for the officers and the public.

Officers will be looking for signs of alcohol and/or drug impairment, with officers checking drivers for proper licensing, delaying motorists only momentarily. When possible, specially trained officers will be available to evaluate those suspected of drug-impaired driving, which now accounts for a growing number of impaired driving crashes.

This enforcement campaign runs through the Labor Day holiday weekend, which is one of the deadliest times of year in terms of alcohol-involved traffic deaths. Sadly, one-third of all traffic deaths involve drunk drivers. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 10,497 people were killed in alcohol-involved crashes, or one person every 50 minutes.

"It's up to drivers to make the smart decision and drive sober not just for this enforcement period, but every day", said Traffic Unit Sergeant Michael Brown. "This isn't about ticketing. This is a campaign to get the message out that driving impaired is illegal and takes lives."

The Ventura Police Department will show zero tolerance for impaired driving or riding and joins efforts by the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to educate drivers that "DUI Doesn't Just Mean Booze." If you take prescription drugs, particularly those with a driving or operating machinery warning label,

you may be impaired enough to get a DUI. Marijuana can also be impairing and result in a DUI, especially in combination with alcohol or other drugs.

In the ten years from 2005-2015, the percentage of drivers in fatal crashes with an impairing drug other than alcohol in their system has risen from 26.2 percent to 42.6 percent. As far back as 2012, a roadside survey in California showed more drivers tested positive for drugs that may impair driving (14 percent) than did for alcohol (7.3 percent).

During this national enforcement campaign, there will also be increased state and national messages about the dangers of riding impaired, which combined with enforcement, aims to drastically reduce drunk or drug impaired riding on our nation's roadways.

Motorcycles require specific training and skill. When a rider adds alcohol, marijuana or impairing prescription medication to the mix, it is not only illegal, but increases the risky nature of riding a motorcycle.

There are so many options out there to get home safely. There is no excuse for getting behind the wheel when you are impaired.

To avoid a DUI and putting others, and yourself, at risk, the Ventura Police Department has a few tips to stay safe on the roads:

- Always designate a sober driver.
- Use public transportation or a ride sharing service to get home.
- Have a friend or family member who is about to drive buzzed or impaired? Take the keys away and make arrangements to get them home safely.
- Report drunk drivers - call 911.

Funding for this DUI operation is provided to the Ventura Police Department by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

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