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This Labor Day, Remember: *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*

Ventura Police Department Shows Zero Tolerance In Its Goal To End Drunk Driving

This Labor Day weekend, families and friends will be celebrating the end of the summer. Sadly, this festive time has also become a dangerous time for America's roads, as many drunk drivers get behind the wheel after celebrating. For this reason, the Ventura Police Department is partnering with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration to stop drunk drivers and help save lives. The high-visibility national enforcement campaign, *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*, runs through September 5, 2016. During this period, local law enforcement will show zero tolerance for drunk driving. Increased national messaging about the dangers of driving drunk, coupled with sobriety checkpoints and increased officers working DUI Saturation Patrols on the road, aim to drastically reduce drunk driving on our nation's roads.

The Ventura Police Department will deploy a DUI/Drivers License checkpoint and special roving DUI Saturation Patrol to stop and arrest alcohol and drug impaired drivers during the end of summer 18 day DUI campaign. The DUI/Drivers License Checkpoint will be on 9/2/16, at an undisclosed location within the city limits between the hours of 8:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m.. Police, Sheriff and the California Highway Patrol will be out looking for the tale-tell signs of drunk driving in order to stop and arrest impaired drivers throughout the region.

According to NHSTA, on average, over 10,000 people died each year (2010 to 2014) in drunk-driving crashes nationwide while California recorded 882 deaths. During the 2014 Labor Day holiday weekend (6 p.m. August 29 – 5:59 a.m. September 2), 40 percent of the fatalities in traffic crashes involved drunk drivers, which was the highest percentage over the five years 2010 to 2014. And nighttime proves to be the most dangerous time to be out on the roads: During the 2014 Labor Day holiday period, 83 percent of drunk-driving crash fatalities occurred between 6 p.m. and 5:59 a.m. – as compared to half of all drunk-driving crash fatalities throughout the rest of that year.

Additionally, 40 percent of crash fatalities on Labor Day weekend in 2014 involved drunk drivers (with blood alcohol concentrations [BACs] of .08 or higher), amounting to 162 lives lost nationwide and 20 in California. And we're not just talking about a little bit of alcohol, either. More than a quarter (28%) of the crash fatalities that occurred on Labor Day weekend involved drivers with BACs of .15 or higher—almost twice the illegal limit.

"People need to understand that drunk driving is not only deadly, but it is illegal," said Sergeant Brunk. "Drunk driving is a massive problem in the United States, with more than 10,000 people dying annually. Drivers need to pay attention to their own driving, but also to others on the road who could be driving drunk," he added. "It is your business. If you think you see a drunk driver, report them – call 911."

The reality is that people aren't invincible. Of the 9,967 people who were killed in impaired-driving crashes in 2014, 64 percent were the drunk drivers themselves. Those 6,391 drunk drivers thought they would make it to their destinations, but they didn't.

"This is important to remember: do not trust yourself when you drink," said Sergeant Brunk. "You may think you aren't drunk, but law enforcement will know you are. Law enforcement officers' skills in detecting and identifying drunk drivers have never been better. They will spot you and arrest you."

Your PD reminds everyone:

Plan a safe way home before the fun begins.

Before drinking, designate a sober driver.

Drivers are encouraged to download the Designated Driver VIP, or "DDVIP," free mobile app for Android or iPhone. The DDVIP app helps find nearby bars and restaurants that feature free incentives for the designated sober driver, from free non-alcoholic drinks to free appetizers and more. The feature-packed app even has social media tie-ins and even a tab for the non-DD to call Uber, Lyft or Curb.

DRUGS, MEDICATION & ALCOHOL = CRASHES: Recent statistics reveal that 30 percent of drivers in fatal crashes had one or more drugs in their systems. A study of active drivers showed more tested positive for drugs that may impair driving (14 percent) than did for alcohol (7.3 percent). Of the drugs, marijuana was most prevalent, at 7.4 percent, slightly more than alcohol.

If you know someone who is about to drive or ride while impaired, take your friend's keys and help your friend make other arrangements to get to where he or she is going safely

As the summer winds to an end, remember that there's no excuse for drunk or impaired driving. *Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over.*

Funding for the extra DUI enforcement operations is a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

