



City of Missoula  
Police Department

**Press Release**

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**For immediate release:** Aug. 22, 2013  
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**MISSOULA POLICE JOIN NATIONAL CRACKDOWN  
TO REDUCE DRUNK DRIVING FATALITIES**

**“Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” Campaign will target  
drunk drivers through Labor Day weekend**

Now through Labor Day, Missoula Police Department officers will be out in force as part of the annual nationwide “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” crackdown on drunk driving. The crackdown, which includes high-visibility enforcement throughout Missoula, will run through Sept. 2.

The effective nationwide drunk driving crackdown will include high-visibility enforcement and high-profile events and will be supported by national paid advertising, creating a comprehensive campaign to curb drunk driving in August and through the Labor Day holiday weekend.

Missoula Police Department officers will aggressively look for drunk drivers during the crackdown and will arrest anyone caught driving drunk.

Although it is illegal in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico to drive drunk (having a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher), far too many people across the nation get behind the wheel after consuming too much alcohol. The latest statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration underscore the serious nature of the nation’s continuing drunk driving epidemic.

“Every year, about one-third of all motor vehicle traffic deaths involve one or more drunk drivers or motorcycle operators,” said Sergeant Greg Amundsen. “In 2011, 9,878 people died in crashes involving drunk drivers in the United States. That works out to approximately one drunk driving fatality every 53 minutes.”

Sergeant Amundsen added that holidays such as the Labor Day holiday are particularly dangerous.

During the Labor Day weekend in 2011, a total of 138 people were killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes involving drivers or motorcycle riders with blood alcohol concentrations (BACs) of .08 g/dL or higher. Of those fatalities, 83 percent occurred during early evening and overnight, from 6 p.m. to 5:59 a.m.

Drunk driving takes a particularly heavy toll among young drivers. Among 18- to 34-year-old drivers killed in motor vehicle traffic crashes during the 2011 Labor Day weekend, 42 percent were alcohol-impaired.

“Research has shown that high-visibility enforcement like the 'Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over' campaign reduces drunk driving fatalities by as much as 20 percent,” Amundsen said. “By joining this nationwide effort, we will make Missoula’s roadways safer for everyone throughout the Labor Day period.”

“We want to remind everyone that getting behind the wheel drunk is a terrible idea,” he said. “Unfortunately, not only does drinking impair your ability to operate a vehicle safely, it also impairs your judgment and good sense about whether you can, or should, drive. If you have any doubt about your sobriety, do not get behind the wheel. If you do choose to drive impaired, you will be arrested. No warnings. No excuses.”

Being arrested for driving drunk brings a wide range of negative consequences into one’s life. Drunk drivers face jail time, loss of their driver’s licenses and steep financial consequences such as higher insurance rates, attorney fees, court costs, lost time at work, and the potential loss of jobs. When family, friends and co-workers find out, violators also often face tremendous personal embarrassment.

“Driving drunk is simply not worth the risk,” Amundsen said. “So don’t take the chance. Remember, we will be out in force, and we will be watching, so ‘Drive sober or get pulled over.’”

” For more information, visit the “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” Campaign Headquarters at [www.TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov](http://www.TrafficSafetyMarketing.gov).

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