



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MISSOULA POLICE CRACK DOWN ON DUI OVER THE HOLIDAY

Missoula – Missoula Police Department officers and Missoula County deputies are joining the Montana Highway Patrol and other law enforcement officers around the state who will be out in force over the long holiday weekend to aggressively target drivers under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

“We expect a lot of traffic in and around the area, so we’ll deploy extra patrols to help keep drivers well-behaved,” Sergeant Greg Amundsen said. “Think about all the families out enjoying the holiday and the fact that driving under the influence of alcohol is a violent crime. It’s just not worth the risk of hurting somebody.”

Most motor vehicle fatalities in Montana occur in the six months between May and October, and more than 60 percent of these involve drugs or alcohol. This period of the year also shows that 62 percent of the fatalities involve drivers between the ages of 18 and 25. A significant segment of the Missoula population is in this age group and at risk.

Missoula police officers and Missoula County deputies will add extra patrols both day and night during the period from July 3 through July 6. While their primary focus will be to get impaired drivers off the streets and prevent drivers who have been drinking from entering the Interstate and state highway system, patrol officers will also enforce all other traffic laws, including Montana’s seat belt laws.

The Missoula Police Department provides these tips for a safe and responsible holiday:

- Offer fun and tasty alternatives to alcoholic beverages.
- Don’t mix drinking with long hours in the sun.
- Have a plan for people to get home safely.
- Promote safe and sober driving among the young adults in your family.
- Prevent alcohol use by minors.
- When you see an impaired driver, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- Leave your phone alone—texting and driving is more dangerous than driving drunk.

- Be aware and watch out for motorcycles.
- Always make sure everyone is buckled up—your best defense against a drunk driver.

Overtime patrols for traffic safety enforcement are funded by the Montana Department of Transportation. High-visibility enforcement is one of the overall strategies employed in Montana's Vision Zero (#VisionZeroMT), a multi-pronged initiative with the ultimate goal of eliminating deaths and injuries on Montana highways. DUI prevention and getting impaired drivers off the roads is critical to saving lives in Montana, which consistently remains among the highest in the nation for its alcohol-related fatality rate.

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