



NEWS RELEASE

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EXTRA DWI ENFORCEMENT CONTINUES THROUGH LABOR DAY; PUBLIC SAFETY, MNDOT STRESS ROAD SAFETY *152 Arrested for DWI during August NightCAP Enforcement*

ST. PAUL — Around 400 Minnesota law enforcement agencies will continue an enhanced DWI crackdown through Labor Day weekend to limit alcohol-related deaths during the holiday weekend. During Labor Day weekends, 2006-2008, 11 people were killed — five were alcohol-related — and another 1,993 motorists were arrested for DWI.

The Minnesota Departments of Public Safety (DPS) and Transportation (MnDOT) urge motorists to travel safely during the weekend by wearing seat belts, paying attention, driving at safe speeds and planning ahead for a safe ride home to avoid driving impaired.

“Holiday weekends are typically deadly on our roads,” says Lt. Matt Langer of the Minnesota State Patrol. “Minnesota law enforcement will do their part to keep motorists safe by taking impaired drivers off the road. We ask that all motorists do the same by planning ahead for a safe ride home and avoiding a DWI.”

During August Operation NightCAP (nighttime concentrated alcohol patrol) DWI enforcement campaigns, 152 motorists were arrested for DWI. Participating NightCAP officers stopped 3,563 vehicles and issued 1,027 citations for traffic- and equipment-related violations — including 77 citations for seat belt non-use.

Traffic crashes killed 1,459 people on Minnesota roads during 2006–2008 — 519 were alcohol related. Historically, more than 30 percent of all fatal traffic crashes are alcohol-related.

Langer adds enhanced NightCAP patrols — which are over and beyond regular DWI enforcement activity — will continue in the state’s 13 deadliest counties for impaired driving: Anoka, Blue Earth, Crow Wing, Dakota, Hennepin, Itasca, Ramsey, Rice, St. Louis, Sherburne, Stearns, Washington and Wright. During 2005–2007, these counties accounted for more than half of the state’s alcohol-related deaths (272) and serious injuries (663).

NightCAP efforts have generated 1,702 DWI arrests since enhanced DWI patrols began in fall 2008: Anoka (430), Blue Earth (131), Crow Wing (42), Dakota (81), Hennepin (388), Itasca (40), Ramsey (264), Rice (56), St. Louis (72), Sherburne (76), Stearns (45), Washington (49), and Wright (28).

MnDOT Work Zone Message:

According to MnDOT, although most work zones around the state will not be active over Labor Day weekend, it may be necessary for lane closures to remain in place. For the latest statewide traffic, construction and travel information, visit www.511mn.org, call 5-1-1 or visit www.mndot.gov.

“While there won’t be much construction activity during the holiday weekend, drivers should still watch for equipment, traffic changes and any highway workers who may be present in the work zones,” says Sue Mulvihill, director of the department’s District Operations Division. “MnDOT advises motorists to plan their trips, identify potential roadwork and drive with caution in work zones.”

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