



NEWS RELEASE

Trust, Fairness and Commitment

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“Sheriff’s Office Announces Traffic Safety Initiative”

Westminster, Carroll County, Maryland, June 29, 2009 ---- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, someone in the United States dies in an alcohol-impaired traffic crash every 40 minutes. Holidays can be even more dangerous. During the Fourth of July, 2007, holiday period, 6pm on July 3rd through 5:59am on July 5th, 34% of all traffic related crashes involved someone with a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher. Furthermore, of the 200 fatal traffic collisions that occurred during the same time frame, 44% involved a motor vehicle operator whose BAC was above the legal limit.

In order to deter these senseless tragedies, the Carroll County Sheriff’s Office announces an increased presence on our roads to promote safe driving. In addition to the regular county patrol, each day will see deputies assigned to specific enforcement efforts designed to reduce dangerous traffic conditions. We encourage everyone whose holiday festivities include alcohol to plan ahead. Waiting until the party begins is too late to choose a designated driver. Remember-- a blood alcohol concentration of .08 or higher is illegal in every state, but that does not mean a person can not be impaired at a lower concentration. It is entirely possible that someone whose blood alcohol concentration is a .06 could still be unable to safely operate a motor vehicle. A designated driver is one who remains sober, consuming no alcohol during the time frame he or she is expected to drive.

Immediately following the holiday weekend, an additional enforcement activity will commence. As an ongoing regional project, the Carroll County Sheriff’s Office will continue participating with the Smooth Operator program. Smooth Operator began in 1997 to target aggressive drivers through enforcement, education, and evaluation. This year, Smooth Operator is focused on the problem of speeding. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data shows the probability of death and debilitating injury doubles for every 10 mph over 50 mph that a vehicle travels. Economic impact from speeding related crashes has been estimated at more than \$40.4 billion a year.

Please join us in keeping Carroll County safe. Deputies will be alert for impaired and aggressive drivers. Plan ahead and drive safely so that everyone can enjoy this Fourth of July weekend.

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