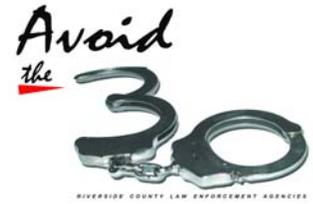




Avoid the 30 Riverside County

PRESS RELEASE



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CONTACT:

Karen Haverkamp
Traffic Bureau Administrative Supervisor
Riverside Police Department
951-353-7980 khaver@riversideca.gov

Avoid the 30 Riverside County launches intensive crackdown on Impaired Driving

Police vow to arrest everyone found driving 'Over the Limit'

Riverside, Ca. – America is facing an impaired-driving crisis, according to federal highway safety officials, and the problem is especially acute during the summer months.

In the continuing effort to combat impaired driving, Avoid the 30 Riverside County today announced it will join other police agencies nationwide, in support of an intensive crackdown on impaired driving during the period of August 15 – September 1. Nationally, more than \$50 million will be spent on this year's crackdown, known by its tagline: *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.*

In 2006 alone, nearly 13,500 people died in crashes in which the driver or motorcycle rider was legally impaired, according to the latest statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Among them were 306 children under age 15 — innocent victims of crashes that could have been avoided. Alcohol-involved deaths in California reached 1,597 in 2006, with more than 31,000 persons injured.

“All too often, innocent law-abiding people suffer tragic consequences and the loss of loved ones due to this careless disregard for human life. We'll be especially vigilant during high-risk nighttime hours when impaired drivers are most likely to be on our roads,” said Riverside Chief of Police Russ Leach.

The national *“Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.”* crackdown is led by NHTSA and combines high-visibility enforcement with heightened public awareness through advertising and publicity.

Across the country, more than \$30 million in State and Federal funds will be spent in support of the high-visibility crackdown through television and radio ads targeted to young male drivers, who are the most common perpetrators of this deadly crime. Another \$20 million will be spent on extra police enforcement — including saturation patrols and sobriety checkpoints — during the crackdown period.

In every U.S. State as well as the District of Columbia it is illegal to drive with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter (g/dL) or higher. More than 10,000 police agencies will participate in this year's mid-August through Labor Day crackdown

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According to the latest data, 32 percent of motor vehicle driving fatalities involved a driver or motorcycle rider with a BAC of .08 or above — an average of one fatality every 39 minutes.

Avoid the 30 Riverside County reports its 30 member agencies will have officers aggressively looking for all impaired drivers during the crackdown and will arrest anyone they find driving while impaired — regardless of age, vehicle type, or time of day.

This summer, law enforcement is again asking for the public's help. "Drunk driving is the top priority for the police, CHP, and sheriff deputies in California, but other motorists on the roads are one of the best weapons we have against drunk drivers," said Christopher J. Murphy, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety. "We're asking the public to report drunk drivers by calling 911 and providing the location and a complete description of the vehicle."

"With millions of cell phones on California roadways your chances of getting busted have risen," said Murphy. "Drunk or other dangerous driving is an emergency, where we encourage other drivers to safely call in. In addition, law enforcement will be out in force conducting sobriety checkpoints, multi-agency task force operations as well as local saturation patrols to get more drunk drivers off the road — and save lives that might otherwise be lost."

"Our message is simple and unwavering. If we find you driving impaired, we will arrest you. No exceptions," said CHP Public Information Officer Chris Blondon. "Even if you beat the odds and walk away from a DUI crash alive, motorists should be aware that the consequences of driving while impaired can still virtually destroy your life."

Violators often face jail time, loss of their driver licenses, or being sentenced to use an ignition interlock, Avoid the 30 Riverside County coordinator Karen Haverkamp said. Drunk driver insurance rates skyrocket. Other financial hits include attorney fees, court costs, lost time at work, and the potential loss of job or job prospects. When family, friends, and co-workers find out, violators can also face tremendous personal embarrassment and humiliation.

"Driving impaired is simply not worth all the consequences. So don't take the chance. Remember, if you are over the limit, you're under arrest," Haverkamp said. "Pre-plan your special events by selecting a Designated Driver before the special event."

Funding for the "Avoid" program is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. For more information on the crackdown, visit the California Avoid Web Site at www.californiaavoid.org and the "Schedule" section of the Riverside County Avoid Web Site at www.avoidthe30.org.

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MEDIA NOTES: To schedule an interview regarding Avoid the 30 DUI Crackdown, or request a ride-along with law enforcement during the holiday period, please contact Karen Haverkamp at 951-353-7980 or via email at khaver@riversideca.gov. To schedule an interview regarding impaired driving efforts and programs in California please contact Chris Cochran at (916) 262-2975 or via email at ccochran@ots.ca.gov.

