

# Delaware General Health District

*Dedicated to your health*

*A Safe Communities Grantee of the Ohio Department of Public Safety*

## NEWS RELEASE

4<sup>th</sup> of JULY TRAFFIC SAFETY

P.O. Box 570  
740-368-1700

1-3 W. Winter St.  
FAX 740-368-1736

Delaware, OH 43015  
Web Site: [www.delawarehealth.org](http://www.delawarehealth.org)

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information contact Jesse Carter, public information officer, at 740-203-2085.

DELAWARE, OH, July 2, 2009 - The Delaware Safe Communities/Safe Kids Coalition and the Delaware General Health District would like to send out a reminder to designate a sober driver before the fun begins this holiday weekend. "The 4<sup>th</sup> of July is supposed to be a time to celebrate our history and gather with friends, but it can quickly end in a tragedy due to impaired driving," said Gail Root, Delaware Safe Communities/Safe Kids coordinator. "If you plan on drinking, be responsible and take appropriate precautions."

In 2008, the July 4 holiday weekend had the second-highest number of fatalities for holiday weekends on Ohio's roads. Almost half of the 15 fatalities were alcohol-related.

"Too many people still fail to recognize that alcohol and driving don't mix. Impaired driving is no accident, nor is it a victimless crime," said Ohio Department of Public Safety Director Henry Guzmán. "We are working to prevent needless fatalities by asking everyone to be responsible and plan ahead to designate a sober driver."

This July 4 holiday weekend, more than 65 law enforcement agencies will be increasing patrols, conducting sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols as well as concentrating on speed, aggressive driving and motorcycle safety. During the holiday weekend, law enforcement will be logging in more than 9,000 hours of enforcement through federal grants provided by ODPS' Ohio Traffic Safety Office. The Ohio State Highway Patrol will have a visible presence on the state's highways and Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) agents will be doing compliance checks in permit establishments as well as working with local law enforcement to target over-serving and underage drinking.

Impaired driving not only increases the chances of a crash that may cause death or serious injury, but it can also lead to trauma and the financial cost of a crash or arrest. For bars and establishments, over-serving or serving underage could also mean costly fines, suspension or revocation of their liquor permit. Everyone should follow these simple tips to keep themselves and others safe:

- Designate a sober driver; have a family member or friend who knows in advance you will be calling for a ride home; or call a cab.
- If you see someone about to drive impaired, take their keys and help them find a safe alternative.
- If you see an impaired driver on the roadway, call law enforcement immediately. Call 1-877-7-PATROL on state highways.
- Always buckle up – it's still your best defense against impaired drivers.

The Safe Communities program was developed through the Ohio Department of Public Safety to encourage community safety partnerships throughout Ohio.