



City of Missoula
Police Department

Press Release

For immediate release: June 29, 2011

Contact: Sgt. Greg Amundsen, Missoula Police Department

Phone: 552-6333

E-mail: gamundsen@ci.missoula.mt.us

POLICE STRESS SAFETY FOR HOLIDAY WEEKEND Extra Traffic Patrols Ready to Work

The Missoula Police Department, in partnership with the Montana Department of Transportation, reminds motorists to be extra cautious when traveling during the long weekend. Independence Day is historically one of the deadliest holidays in Montana, so extra traffic patrols will be working to prevent impaired driving and encourage motorists to buckle up.

“Driving impaired is not worth the risk to the public,” said Sgt. Greg Amundsen. “Whether you’ve been floating on the river, boating, picnicking, or camping, make sure that the person driving home is sober and alert. I want everyone traveling to drive sober and safe including making sure everyone in the vehicle is buckled up.”

Amundsen also reminds the public that primary enforcement for Montana’s child passenger law begins July 1, so make sure that youngsters age 6 and 60 pounds or less are in appropriate child safety seats. Best practice is to keep youngsters in booster seats until they are 8 years old and reach a height of 4 feet, 9 inches. And the safest place for a child under age 13 is in the back seat. Missoula County has several child passenger safety technicians. They are trained to provide parents and caregivers with the latest information on transporting children safely.

Funding for the extra traffic patrols is provided by the Montana Department of Transportation through the Selective Traffic Enforcement Program. The department provides tools for planning ahead for a safe ride at www.plan2live.mt.gov, along with other safe driving strategies.

When planning a 4th of July party, take steps to have a good time and still keep your friends from driving impaired:

- Provide non-alcoholic beverages for designated drivers.
- Have plenty of food, especially high-protein foods, which slow the absorption of alcohol.
- Know your legal responsibilities if you choose to serve alcohol at your event.
- Keep the adults and children's drinks separate.
- Be prepared to take your guests' car keys if they become impaired, and make arrangements to get someone home safely if this occurs.

“We will do our part to keep motorists safe by providing extra patrols during the 4th of July weekend to prevent impaired driving and encourage everyone to buckle up,” Amundsen said. “We want to make sure that everyone enjoys the long weekend and hope to end it without a DUI injury crash within the city limits.”

#

Ginny Merriam, Public Information/Communications Officer, City of Missoula

Office: 552-6007 Cell: 546-7692

