

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

3927 Lennane Drive, Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95834
(916) 419-2510



CONTACT: John Carr
(916) 419-2525

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ABC, CHP, LOCAL AUTHORITIES POOL EFFORTS TO PROMOTE A SAFE 4TH OF JULY HOLIDAY

DUI To Be Targeted on Roadways and Waterways Statewide

(SACRAMENTO) As tens of thousands of Californians plan to celebrate the Independence Day weekend with picnics and other outdoor activities this weekend, they are cautioned to arrange for one other item, a designated driver. A partnership of the California Highway Patrol, Alcoholic Beverage Control, The Office of Traffic Safety and many local law enforcement agencies will focus on impaired drivers.

At a joint news conference in Sacramento's Discovery Park, CHP Deputy Chief Stan Perez noted that when the picnic or party breaks up, two dangers still loom. "You still have to get behind the wheel of your car or boat to leave. We'll be up there on the freeway looking for impaired drivers. Plan now to have a designated driver."

On the roadways, the CHP will have up to eighty percent of its officers on duty looking for impaired drivers. The Sacramento County Sheriff's Department said it will have its Marine Enforcement Detail out in force in the Delta, Sacramento and American Rivers. "We take boating under the influence very seriously. Tragedies can be averted if everyone does their part," stated Sacramento Undersheriff John McGinness.

In addition, extra ABC investigators will be on duty statewide checking ABC licensed businesses to ensure that underage or intoxicated people are not being served. "We'll have every available investigator on duty this weekend. We call on all liquor licensees to be extra vigilant for underage drinkers this weekend," stated Jerry Jolly, ABC Director.

Much of the funding for law enforcement overtime is provided by the state Office of Traffic Safety to cash-strapped departments. "Last July 4th weekend, 58 people were killed in California traffic collisions. Drinking and driving played a significant role in the cause of many of those crashes," said Christopher Murphy, Acting Director of OTS.

During the holiday weekend, Caltrans changeable message signs will include traffic safety warnings as last minute reminders to motorists. "Safety is our number one priority and we are proud to be part of this statewide effort to reduce alcohol-related injuries and fatalities over the holiday weekend," stated Caltrans Director Will Kempton.

The CHP will also be joining forces with statewide traffic safety agencies from Nevada, Arizona and Oregon in C.A.R.E. (Combined Accident Reduction Effort) enforcement focusing on DUI, speeding, and safety belt use this weekend.