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DON'T LET SUMMER BE A BUZZ KILL WITH A DWI
Extra DWI Patrols on Northfield Roads Aug. 17 – Sept. 2

Northfield, Minn. – Long drives, scenic bike rides and evening walks. They are all part of summer in Minnesota, but if you're an impaired driver, pedestrian or bicyclist, your summer days may abruptly end.

Crashes involving alcohol continue to change Minnesotans lives forever. From 2012-2016, there were 138 people who lost their lives in drunk driving crashes during the summer months, the deadliest season. While drunk driving continues to be a leading factor in traffic fatalities, impaired bicyclists and pedestrians also play a role in lives that are changed forever with 414 alcohol-related serious injuries during the same timeframe.

Drunk Driving-Related Fatalities and Alcohol-Related Serious Injuries 2012-2016		
Months	Drunk Driving-Related Fatalities (drunk driving-related is any driver at .08 or above)	Alcohol-Related Serious Injuries (alcohol-related is any evidence of alcohol in a driver, pedestrian or bicyclist)
December – February	74	249
March – May	102	361
June - August	138	414
September - November	118	358

To help keep the roads safe, **The Northfield Police Department** will be participating with law enforcement statewide in an extra DWI enforcement campaign starting Aug. 17 and running through Sept. 2.

Officers, deputies and troopers from more than 300 agencies will be working overtime with funding provided by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety coordinates the extra enforcement and education effort.

“We all need to take responsibility for our own actions,” said **Sergeant Kevin Tussing**. “If you are a driver, line up a sober ride. If you've been drinking, stay off your bicycle as your judgement can be impaired. If you've been drinking and are walking to a destination, make sure a sober friend is walking with you. One bad choice can lead to a lifetime of heartache.”

Labor Day – No Time Off for Law Enforcement

Unfortunately, the Labor Day period continues to be a working holiday for troopers, officers and deputies who are finding drunk drivers behind the wheel. The holiday period is the third worst for drunk drivers when it comes to DWIs per hour at 3.8 (Halloween is the worst at 4 per hour).

Law enforcement officers consistently arrest more than 400 people for drunk driving during the long holiday weekend, and about 25,000 are arrested each year.

Labor Day DWI Arrests (Friday – Tuesday)

Year	DWIs
2013	482
2014	442
2015	501

2016	421
2017	444
Total	2,290

DWI Arrests Year-Round

Year	DWIs
2013	26,014
2014	25,392
2015	25,374
2016	24,059
2017	24,862
Total	125,701

DWI Consequences

- Loss of license for up to a year, thousands of dollars in costs and possible jail time.
- Repeat DWI offenders, as well as first-time offenders arrested at 0.16 and above alcohol-concentration level, must use [ignition interlock](#) in order to regain legal driving privileges or face at least one year without a driver's license.
- First-time offenders arrested at 0.16 and above are required to use interlock for one year.
- Offenders with three or more offenses are required to use interlock for three to six years, or they will never regain driving privileges.

Speak Up and Plan a Sober Ride

- Plan for a safe ride — designate a sober driver, use a safe, alternative transportation option, or stay at the location of the celebration.
- Speak up – Offer to be a designated driver or be available to pick up a loved one anytime, anywhere. If you see an impaired person about to get behind the wheel, get them a safe ride home.
- Buckle up — the best defense against a drunk driver.
- Report drunk driving — call 911 when witnessing impaired driving behavior. Be prepared to provide location, license plate number and observed dangerous behavior.

Local agencies participating in the statewide campaign are The Dundas, Faribault, Lonsdale and Northfield Police Departments along with the Rice County Sheriff's Office and the Minnesota State Patrol.

The enhanced DWI enforcement campaign is a component of the state's Toward Zero Deaths (TZD) program. The Minnesota departments of Public Safety, Transportation and Health collaborate on improving traffic safety for all. A primary vision of the TZD program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes – education, enforcement, engineering, and emergency medical and trauma response.

Definitions

- Driving While Impaired (DWI) is a violation for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Alcohol-related: any evidence of alcohol detected in a driver, pedestrian or bicyclist.
- Impaired-related: any driver, pedestrian or bicyclist with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or above.
- Drunk-driving-related: any driver with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or above.