

NEWS RELEASE

Alabama Department of Public Safety

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TROOPERS FOCUS ON SAFETY DURING THE FOURTH, *Plan to Step Up Patrols During the Holiday Travel Period*

MONTGOMERY — All available state troopers will be on duty during the Independence Day holiday period, according to Col. W.M. Coppage, Department of Public Safety director. Coppage said the increased trooper presence, coupled with an intensive enforcement effort, will promote heightened roadway safety for holiday motorists.

Coppage said overtime grants administered by regional community traffic safety program coordinators with the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs will help fund enhanced patrols statewide. He said troopers throughout Alabama will be watchful for all violations of traffic law, including impaired driving, speeding, following too closely and failure to use safety belts and child restraints. He said enforcement plans for the holiday period also include driver license and equipment checkpoints, saturation and line patrols.

Coppage stressed the importance of drivers keeping focused on safety throughout the holiday period. He urged motorists to “slow down, never drive while impaired by alcohol or drugs, and buckle up on every trip.” He also urged them to practice patience and courtesy toward other drivers during the extended holiday travel period.

Coppage reminded motorists that Alabama’s recently amended child restraint law now requires proper restraint usage for all child passengers up to age 15 in front and back seats. He said the text of the law can be viewed on Public Safety’s Web site www.dps.alabama.gov.

Troopers plan to focus patrols on heavily traveled roadways, including interstates and popular beach and vacation routes, in conjunction with Operation C.A.R.E. A cooperative effort by state police nationwide, C.A.R.E – Combined Accident Reduction Effort – seeks to promote traffic safety during holiday periods through enforcement and safety awareness.

The Department of Public Safety estimates that 20 people may die in traffic crashes in Alabama during the 102-hour Independence Day period, which begins at 6 p.m. Friday, June 30, and ending at midnight Tuesday, July 4. Last year there were 16 fatalities during the 78-hour Fourth of July period. Ten of the crash victims were not using safety belts, and at least six of the traffic deaths were alcohol related.

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for more information contact:

Public Information/Education • P.O. Box 1511 • Montgomery AL 36102-1511

(334) 242-4445 • <http://www.dps.state.al.us/>