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TROOPERS GEAR UP FOR LABOR DAY TRAFFIC SAFETY

Impaired Driving Crackdown to Continue

MONTGOMERY — Alabama’s state troopers are gearing up for the Labor Day weekend, according to Department of Public Safety Director Col. J. Christopher Murphy, with all available troopers on duty to ensure the safety of motorists throughout this last major holiday of the summer travel season.

Labor Day will cap an intensive, nationwide impaired driving crackdown – “Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.” – that began Aug. 21. Murphy said troopers, along with local and county law enforcement and traffic safety agencies throughout Alabama, will continue the concerted effort to crack down on impaired driving through Labor Day.

Murphy said “Task Force Zero” – trooper teams that target impaired drivers – will be using the department’s BAT Mobiles at selected multi-agency checkpoints. The BAT Mobiles, vehicles equipped with specialized breath-testing equipment, allow on-scene processing of impaired drivers. DPS purchased the vehicles with grants awarded by Gov. Bob Riley and administered by the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs. Equipment for the vehicles was provided by the Department of Forensic Sciences.

“Troopers have zero tolerance for impaired drivers. At checkpoints and on patrol, we will search out those who commit the crime of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs and place them under arrest,” said Murphy.

He said troopers also plan to target violations that contribute to traffic crashes, including speeding, following too closely, improper passing and failure to signal. Overtime funding provided by the Alabama Department of Transportation and ADECA will allow additional troopers to patrol throughout the holiday period.

Murphy said troopers will be patrolling in motorcycles and semi-marked vehicles, in addition to traditional blue and gray, fully marked cruisers. All troopers will be in the clearly identifiable Alabama state trooper uniform.

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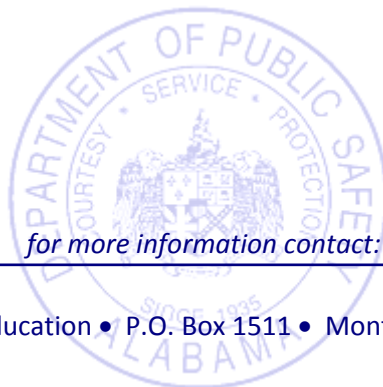
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The official 78-hour Labor Day travel period begins at 6 p.m. Friday, Sept. 4, and ends at midnight on Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 7. Last year eight people — six vehicle occupants and two pedestrians — died in traffic crashes in Alabama during the 78-hour travel period. At least two of the crash victims died as the result of alcohol-related crashes, and four of the six vehicle occupants were not using safety restraints.

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

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