



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Fourth of July, Fireworks and Fun State Law Enforcement Encourages Alabamians to Make Safety Part of their Holiday Plans

[Montgomery, Alabama] – Across Alabama, families and friends will gather to celebrate Independence Day with parades, parties and fireworks. State law enforcement has teamed together to remind Alabamians that safety is important when traveling Alabama roadways or waterways, and when celebrations involve fireworks.

For many people, Independence Day activities include alcohol, but the holiday quickly goes from festive to fatal when people choose to drive on roadways or operate vessels on waterways after drinking. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration shows during the July 4th period in 2012 (6 p.m. July 3 to 5:59 a.m. July 5), 179 people were killed in crashes across the nation, and 44 percent of those deadly crashes involved alcohol.

In addition, each Fourth of July, thousands of injuries are attributed to the use of fireworks. A 2013 U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission study revealed eight deaths and an estimated 11,400 consumers sustained injuries related to fireworks across the United States. This is an increase from 8,700 injuries in 2012. Sixty-five percent (7,400) of the 2013 injuries occurred within 30 days of July 4, 2013.

Secretary of Law Enforcement Spencer Collier said, “State law enforcement agencies are working together with county and municipal agencies to reduce injuries and deaths during this holiday period by enforcing traffic, boating, alcoholic beverage and fireworks laws.” State law enforcement urges residents to follow the safety tips below:

- **Restrict access and closely monitor teens to prevent underage use of alcoholic beverages.**
- **Avoid driving or boating while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.**
- **Buckle up on the road or on the water -- no matter how short your trip.** Occupants of all ages should use seat belts or child restraints when traveling by motor vehicles. On waterways, all occupants of water vessels should use U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets.
- **Focus on driving or boating, and avoid such distractions as texting and using cell phones.**

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- **Slow down in construction zones.** Drivers pose the greatest danger in work zone crashes by speeding, not paying attention and driving while impaired or distracted.
- **Use common sense and obey the law when using fireworks.** Do not discharge fireworks within 600 feet of any enclosed building; do not shoot fireworks into or from a motor vehicle or vessel; do not shoot fireworks toward people.
- **Supervise children 15 and younger.** Never allow young children to play with or ignite fireworks, including sparklers. Parents may not realize that young children suffer injuries from sparklers, which burn at temperatures of about 2,000 degrees — hot enough to melt some metals.
- **Use fireworks in a clear, open area outdoors and away from flammables and combustibles.** There also should be an ample water supply and fire extinguisher on hand.
- **Never consume alcohol while handling fireworks.**

Contacts

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The Alabama Law Enforcement Agency (ALEA) was created by Act 2013-67 and represents the consolidation and realignment of 12 state law enforcement agencies/functions into one entity. ALEA is currently in a transition period, and upon full implementation on January 1, 2015, will be responsible for the functions and missions of the Alabama Department of Homeland Security, Department of Public Safety, Alabama Bureau of Investigation, Fusion Center, Criminal Justice Information Center, Marine Police, Alcoholic Beverage Control Board Enforcement, Department of Revenue Enforcement, Forestry Commission Investigations, Agricultural and Industry Investigations, Public Service Commission Enforcement, and Office of Prosecution Service Computer Forensics Lab.