Individuals driving over the speed limit or while impaired pose a very serious threat to their safety and to the safety of others on the roadways. Such danger is further amplified when speeding and driver impairment are combined.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) considers a crash to be speeding-related if the driver is charged with a speeding-related offense, or if the responding officer demonstrates that the driver was going too fast for the road conditions at the time or was exceeding the posted speed limit. This can have dangerous consequences including:

- Reducing a driver’s ability to negotiate curves or maneuver around obstacles in the roadway;
- Extending the distance traveled before a vehicle can stop;
- Increasing the distance a vehicle travels while the driver reacts to a hazard;
- Increasing the risk of crashes and injuries because other vehicles and pedestrians may not be able to judge distance correctly.

When a driver couples dangerous speeds with impairment due to drugs and/or alcohol, they further diminish their ability to safely navigate the roadways. According to NHTSA, in 2012, 42 percent of speeding drivers had a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher in fatal crashes, compared to only 16 percent of non-speeding drivers involved in fatal crashes. Furthermore, the 2012 statistics showed that this percentage is elevated during nighttime hours. Between midnight and 3 a.m., 69 percent of speeding drivers involved in fatal crashes were alcohol impaired (BAC = .08+) as compared to 43 percent of non-speeding drivers.

Due to high rates of fatal co-occurrence, it is important that law enforcement agencies address these traffic safety issues both separately and together. More information on these issues can be found on the NHTSA website, which includes the 2012 survey.
Rising Concerns over Marijuana-Impaired Driving

By: Chuck Hayes, IACP, DEC Program Regional Operations Coordinator

After alcohol, marijuana is the most frequently detected substance in drivers involved in crashes, according to recent reviews of studies on drug-impaired driving. In fact, these studies reveal that being under the influence of marijuana nearly doubles a driver’s risk of being involved in a motor vehicle crash resulting in serious injury or death. Most experts agree that marijuana slows decision making, decreases peripheral vision, and impedes multitasking—all important factors in safe driving.

Combining marijuana with alcohol appears to increase impairment dramatically, beyond the effects of either substance alone. Researchers from Columbia University, NY, who studied fatal crash statistics from six U.S. states, found that marijuana involvement rose from 4 percent in 1999 to 12 percent in 2010. They also determined that by combining alcohol with marijuana (a common combination with marijuana users who drive), a driver is over 23 times more likely to die in a crash than when sober.

A major concern is that marijuana use among college students may be at its highest level since 1981. According to the latest Monitoring the Future study, 5.1 percent of college students used marijuana daily or almost daily in 2013, up from 3.5 percent in 2007; 36 percent of college students used marijuana in the past year, compared with 30 percent in 2006. Since college students compose a significant part of the general driving population, these numbers may have an adverse impact on highway safety in the U.S.

To help deter the expected increases in drivers impaired by drugs, especially marijuana, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, working in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), continues to expand drugged driving response training for police officers, prosecutors, and toxicologists. These programs include an increased emphasis on identifying marijuana impairment. Two highly effective drugged driving detection programs include the Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) and Drug Recognition Expert Training (DRE).

DRE training focuses on the signs, symptoms, and impairment indicators of the DRE seven drug categories—depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, dissociative anesthetics, narcotic analgesics, inhalants, and cannabis. All 50 U.S. states and Canada participate in the program; over 7,500 DREs are credentialed by the IACP.

The 16-hour classroom ARIDE training bridges the gap between the Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST) program and DRE training. It provides police officers with basic skills on how to identify indicators of drug impairment at roadside. For departments and officers who have neither the availability nor resources to attend the classroom training version, NHTSA has developed an online version of ARIDE available to any police officer and can be completed at the officer’s own pace.

Since the inception of the 16-hour ARIDE curriculum in 2009, more than 36,000 officers have been trained to detect impaired driving. Additionally, 58 DRE schools conducted in 2013 trained more than 1,000 officers as DREs.

(continued on page 3)
Rising Concerns over Marijuana-Impaired Driving

In many parts of the U.S., DREs are seeing a gradual but steady increase in the number of drugged driving cases involving marijuana. The Colorado State Patrol's DUI Drugs program reported that in the first six months of 2014, 77 percent of their drugged driving arrests involved drivers who used marijuana in combination with other substances, and 42 percent involved drivers who used marijuana only.

As efforts continue to decriminalize recreational marijuana in the U.S., law enforcement leaders and highway safety advocates must not underestimate the impact such actions may have on public health and the adverse impact it will have on highway safety.

The Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP) is making great efforts to reduce speed-related crashes in its community by conducting aggressive education and enforcement campaigns. Working with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), Ohio Department of Transportation, Ohio Department of Health, the Cincinnati Reds, local law enforcement, local high schools, and the media, the OSHP has had an impact in Ohio and is the 2014 National Law Enforcement Challenge Speed Awareness special category winner. The OSHP patrols highways across Ohio’s 88 counties, which altogether is about 49,000 miles of highway — the 10th largest highway system in the United States. Around 1,600 sworn troopers make up the OSHP and work at 58 patrol posts throughout the state.

EDUCATION

Media Outreach: OSHP leverages local media to catalyze safety belt awareness across Ohio. For example, it regularly conducts safety belt “blitzes” that include seatbelt education distributed to the public via television news and newspapers, as well as media ride-a-longs that allow reporters to see — and therefore share — what officers see. Press releases and media interviews are a regular occurrence and typically incorporate safety belt messages even when the primary subject is another infraction.

Public Service Announcements: Sports partnerships have been an ideal vehicle for safety-belt PSAs in Ohio, according to OSHP, which in 2013 partnered with the Ohio Traffic Safety Office, the Cincinnati Reds and Fox Sports Ohio to produce a television PSA promoting seatbelt compliance. The PSA — which aired on Fox Sports Ohio during Reds games between May 24 and August 4, 2013 — targeted men aged 16 to 34. The icing on the cake: OSHP and partner agencies distributed plush seatbelt wraps to fans at three separate games.

Seatbelt Incentive Programs: OSHP’s 58 patrol posts have partnered with community high schools and local law enforcement agencies to promote safety belt use among teen drivers. Officers distribute safety belt education to students and conduct safety belt checks at schools, where belted drivers receive a small reward, such as a restaurant coupon, that provides an incentive for them to continue wearing their seatbelt.

Regional Child Restraint Coordinators: Nine OSHP officers have completed the National Child Passenger Certification Training Program and therefore act as regional child restraint coordinators on behalf of the Ohio Department of Health. As local contacts for OSHP’s 58 patrol posts, they are called upon to assist with education or safety seat donations when officers pull over motorists who either lack a child safety seat or have one that’s improperly installed.

Excessive speed is a top contributor in fatal vehicle crashes. By targeting both education and enforcement efforts on the “big four” high-risk driving behaviors, including speed, the OPP has reduced the number of fatal crashes on its highways.
ENFORCEMENT

Metro Posts: OSHP has adopted a new, localized approach to traffic enforcement that empowers patrol-post commanders to make decisions at the community level. This approach has allowed OSHP to concentrate more resources in urban areas, including Ohio’s most populous metro areas—Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati—where OSHP in recent years has opened three new patrol posts. Enforcement by those posts resulted in a 37 percent increase in the number of seatbelt citations between 2012 and 2013, and a 147 percent increase in child safety seat citations.

I-80 Challenge: In July 2013, OSHP participated in the I-80 Challenge. Organized by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as part of its “More Cops, More Stops” campaign, the challenge lasted eight days, during which time highway patrols in 11 states increased enforcement of seatbelt and other traffic violations along Interstate 80. In Ohio, the challenge produced a 24 percent increase in overall occupant-protection citations, compared to the same eight-day period in 2012, and increased the seatbelt use rate from 94 percent before the event to 97 percent after.

Holiday Enforcements: OSHP conducted six holiday enforcement periods and one “All-Out Day” utilizing all available officers in 2013. Although they totaled only 20 days — just 5 percent of the calendar — these seven targeted enforcement periods yielded 18 percent of the occupant-protection citations issued by OSHP during the year.

RESULTS

OHSP’s dual focus on education and enforcement helped reduce the number of unrestrained occupants in fatal and injury traffic crashes in Ohio by 10 percent in 2013. Specifically, the number of unrestrained occupants in fatal crashes fell by 16 percent. Furthermore, seatbelt use in Ohio increased from 82 percent in 2012 to 84.5 percent in 2013—the highest recorded rate in state history.

INSIGHTS FOR OTHER AGENCIES

1. Decentralize education and enforcement in order to concentrate resources in geographical areas that need extra attention.
2. Engage local media in order to raise public awareness about safety belt use.
3. Offer incentives to teens and other at-risk drivers to encourage safety belt use.
4. Leverage partnerships — with professional sports teams, for instance, and neighboring agencies — to amplify your occupant protection messages.

The National Law Enforcement Challenge is a national traffic safety awards program that focuses on occupant protection, impaired driving, and speed. Visit www.iacp.org/NLEC to learn more about the program or download a copy of the Traffic Safety Innovations booklet.
National Law Enforcement Challenge (NLEC) participants are law enforcement agencies who are actively serving their communities by making them a safer place to live. The NLEC focuses on addressing traffic safety issues to reduce injuries, save lives, and detect and deter crime. NLEC application criteria focuses on occupant protection, impaired driving, and speeding. Applying agencies must also choose a State/Local Issue that allows agencies to describe a community-specific traffic safety issue and how it is being addressed in their jurisdiction.

Applications for the 2015 National Law Enforcement Challenge are due Friday, May 1, 2015 and should be submitted to nlec@theiacp.org. See below for valuable resources and tips that will help you put together your agency’s application.

Updated How-To Guide

The How-To Guide for the NLEC application is the most comprehensive guide to submitting your agency’s application. Read the How-To Guide before you begin gathering information for the application. You download the How-To Guide from the NLEC website.

New Content & Materials PDF

In order to provide participating agencies with the cleanest and most efficient way to submit their applications to the 2015 NLEC, the format has been changed so that agencies can fill in their narrative summaries of their year-round efforts in each main category on a PDF form. You can download the new Content & Materials PDF off of the NLEC website.

New Resources

There are several new resources available on the NLEC website:
- Attachment Templates
- Attachment Templates with Model Applications
- NLEC Marketing Flyer
- 10 Tips to Jumpstart Your Application
- Model Applications
  - Washington State Patrol
  - California Highway Patrol
  - Henrico County Police Division
  - Peachtree City Police Department
Impaired Driving Updates: The ARIDE Program

NHTSA, with input from the IACP Technical Advisory Panel (TAP) and the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police, has developed a program that encompasses both Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST) and Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC) in an effort to provide law enforcement with a dual-education on drugs and alcohol, the impairment that they cause, and how to evaluate and identify these substances.

The Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE) program works to bridge the gap between SFST and DEC by equipping officers with knowledge related to drug impairment and by promoting the use of DREs in states that have the DEC program. The program is a 16-hour training course taught by DREs, DRE instructors, or SFST instructors who are also DREs.

The ARIDE course is now available to law enforcement personnel and prosecutors who meet SFST proficiency requirements. To access this training, visit: https://tsilearn.dot.gov/. For further information about the program, please contact Bill O’Leary at NHTSA at (202) 366-0543.

Resources from NHTSA:

Motivations for Speeding, Volume I: Summary Report  
Aggressive Driving Enforcement Best Practices  
Stop Aggressive Driving Toolkit  
Definitions Related to Speed  
State Speed Laws  
The International Drug Evaluation & Classification Program - Training and Certification  
IACP’s Speed and Alcohol in Brief - Duluth, MN, Police Department  
IACP’s Speed and Alcohol in Brief - Washington State Patrol