



MEDIA RELEASE

August 12, 2010

St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office to Conduct Sobriety Checkpoints

Beginning this week, St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office will partner with Checkpoint Strikeforce to conduct sobriety checkpoints at undisclosed locations throughout St. Mary's County. These Checkpoints are an effort to crack down on impaired drivers and those driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. These enhanced enforcement efforts are part of Maryland's "Toward Zero Deaths" goal for August, which focuses on eradicating fatalities caused by impaired drivers and other preventable traffic risks such as aggressive driving, speeding and lack of seat belt use.

The sobriety checkpoints will be clearly marked with signs, lights and uniformed officers. Officers' primary objective will be to check for violations including driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. They will also use this opportunity to heighten awareness about the dangers associated with drunk driving and send a clear message that checkpoints are but one tool in the arsenal used to combat drunk driving.

Maryland has a zero tolerance law which means that individuals under the age of 21 are subject to arrest and license suspension or revocation for any amount of alcohol in their blood. For those of legal drinking age, Maryland's alcohol limit is .08, which can be caused by consuming as little as one drink over a one-hour period. In addition, Maryland is tougher than most states in that, a breath alcohol content (BAC) of .07 can also lead to a driving while under the influence of alcohol arrest. Beware of the false sense of security, Maryland law enforcement have the tools needed to keep impaired drivers off the road and responsible motorists safe.

Last year in Maryland, alcohol or drugs were a factor in 29 percent of fatal collisions and 24,000 people were arrested for driving while impaired by alcohol or drugs. By promoting awareness about the dangers of impaired driving St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office hopes to reduce the number of drivers under the influence and related collisions, injuries and fatalities.

Sheriff Timothy K. Cameron would like to remind citizens to plan ahead: always designate a sober driver; call a taxi or take public transportation if you are impaired, and don't let others who are impaired take to the road. If anyone has any questions about Check Point Strike Force contact Deputy First Class James Stone at 301-863-4816 x1458.