



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **DUI Checkpoint Planned for St. Patrick's Day**

The San Diego Police Department Traffic Unit will be conducting a DUI checkpoint on March 17, 2011 at an undisclosed location within the city limits between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 3:00 a.m. DUI checkpoints are an enforcement tool proven effective in reducing the number of persons killed and injured in alcohol-related crashes, as well as being a valuable means for heightening awareness of the dangers of impaired driving.

Officers will be checking drivers for signs of alcohol and/or drug impairment. Officers will check for proper licensing and will strive to impact motorists only momentarily. If officers suspect that a driver has been drinking or is impaired, they will conduct a field sobriety test. Those who fail can expect jail, vehicle storage fees, license suspension, insurance rate increases, along with fines, fees, DUI classes, other expenses that can exceed \$10,000.

Statewide, overall traffic deaths declined by 23%, from 3,995 in 2007 to 3,081 in 2009. Total traffic fatalities are at their lowest levels in six decades, since the federal government began compiling figures. According to federal statistics, DUI-related deaths declined by 16%, from 1,132 in 2007 to 950 in 2009. Alcohol-impaired deaths still account for the largest category of overall vehicle fatalities in 2009, with 31% of all deaths caused by a drunk or impaired driver.

“Everyone in California should be heartened with these figures,” said Christopher J. Murphy, Director of the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). “But as encouraging as this is, we can’t let up on the efforts to encourage and support traffic safety. You can help make your community safe; if you see a drunk driver – Call 9-1-1.”

Funding for this and other DUI checkpoints is provided to San Diego Police Department by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, targeting those who still don’t heed the message to designate a sober driver.

**MEDIA NOTE:** To schedule an interview regarding the San Diego Traffic Safety Operations or the location of the checkpoint, please contact Mark McCullough at (619) 818-4860 or via email at [mmccullough@pd.sandiego.gov](mailto:mmccullough@pd.sandiego.gov). To schedule an interview regarding impaired driving efforts and programs in California please contact Chris Cochran, California Office of Traffic Safety at (916) 509-3063 or via email at [ccochran@ots.ca.gov](mailto:ccochran@ots.ca.gov).

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