



San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 22, 2017
Contact: Chief Deputy City Attorney Mike Giorgino at
mgiorgino@sandiego.gov or (619) 533-5886

San Diego City Attorney's Office Awarded Special Drug DUI Prosecution Grant

Drivers arrested for being under the influence of drugs in the City of San Diego can expect to face highly trained, specialized prosecutors, funded by a \$294,414 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). The grant to the City Attorney's Office will continue to fund a team that works drug DUI cases from arrest through conviction and sentencing.

"Driving under the influence of drugs can have devastating effects on San Diego drivers and their families," City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **"Our City continues to see DUI cases involving the use of prescription drugs, marijuana, and illegal drugs, often in combination with alcohol. This grant allows our highly specialized prosecution team to work closely with law enforcement to hold accountable those who endanger our fellow citizens."**

The program is designed to prevent impaired driving and reduce drug-impaired traffic fatalities and injuries. In 2014, there were 79 deaths and 2,154 serious injuries as a result of DUI crashes in the County of San Diego. Funding from this DUI Prosecution Grant will aid the City Attorney's Office in handling cases through each step of the criminal process from crash scene to sentencing, prosecuting both drug and drug/alcohol combination-impaired driving cases.

Prosecution team members will work with California's Traffic Safety Resource Prosecutor Training Network to expand knowledge and resources in the office by obtaining and delivering specialized training, including the emerging problem of drug-impaired driving. Team members will share information with peers and law enforcement throughout the county and state.

"Vertical prosecution teams working serious DUI cases get the positive results needed," said OTS Director Rhonda Craft. **"The San Diego City Attorney's Office, with assistance from the Office of Traffic Safety, will be working to help keep the streets across the City of San Diego safe for everyone."**

While alcohol remains the worst offender for DUI crashes, the San Diego City's Attorney Office supports the new effort from OTS that aims to drive awareness that "DUI Doesn't Just Mean Booze." Prescription medications and marijuana can also be impairing by themselves, or in combination with alcohol, and can result in a DUI arrest.

Funding for the program comes from a grant by the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

###