

Captain's Message
West Traffic Division
December 2017

December has previously been proclaimed by the President of the United States as "*National Impaired Driving Prevention Month*." Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) has declared December as "*National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month*." One of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) special events for the month of December will be the "*Holiday Season Drunk Driving Campaign*." Another NHTSA event scheduled for December 13 through 31 is "*Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over*." An additional NHTSA event is *Project Roadblock: "Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving."* The United States Presidential Proclamation, along with each additional Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention event, reminds us that it is time to raise awareness about the consequences of driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs.

With the approach of the upcoming holidays and related celebrations comes an increase in vehicular and pedestrian traffic, along with the increased consumption of alcoholic beverages. Consuming alcoholic beverages or the use of drugs severely hinders a driver's ability to make the appropriate driving decisions, which can have disastrous results. Although many individuals have not seen the devastating results of alcohol or drug related traffic collisions, the reality is that this is a serious problem facing the traveling members of the community and the nation. When an individual is operating a vehicle while impaired, he or she becomes a threat to the lives of pedestrians, bicyclists, and other motorists. Statistics indicate that the problem of impaired drivers operating vehicles on our roadways is extensive. Impaired drivers cause severe injuries, paralysis, and death to thousands of innocent people, including hundreds of children, every year.

In addition to the enforcement efforts of all Los Angeles police officers, West Traffic Division (WTD) has a unit of officers whose primary function is the detection of impaired drivers and the enforcement of laws prohibiting driving under the influence of alcohol and drugs. This specialized unit is the Driving Under Influence (DUI) Task Force (DTF). The enforcement efforts of West Traffic Division officers, combined with all LAPD officers, serve to educate the public and decrease the number of tragic collisions. A few tips to follow to help ensure a safe holiday for all include:

- Designate a sober driver before celebrations begin.
- Never serve alcohol to anyone under the age of 21.
- Plan safe parties and provide non-alcoholic drinks to designated drivers. Also, stop serving alcoholic beverages during the last hour of gatherings.
- Have an alternate plan to get home in case plans change.
- Be mindful of pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists since their smaller overall size can be more difficult to see as we share the road.
- Please remember that when you take control of a vehicle, the safety of the public, including other drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists is dependent upon your ability to operate your vehicle in a safe manner.

Community Traffic Services Unit (CTSU) is one of the specialized units operating as a part of West Traffic Division that works to resolve particular community concerns. If you have traffic safety concerns in a particular area, you may contact CTSU at 213-473-0215 or West Traffic Division at 213-473-0222 to voice your concerns. Also, please see CTSU's Web Page listed under the West Traffic Division Web Page.

The areas within Operations-West Bureau and West Traffic Division are Hollywood Area, Wilshire Area, West Los Angeles Area, Pacific Area and Olympic Area. Any of the geographical areas' Web Pages can be accessed via LAPD Online. Please check the Crime Prevention Circular for the areas that are of particular interest to you.

Captain Gary Walters
Commanding Officer
West Traffic Division

Tips to help you and your loved ones arrive safely:

- * Look both ways twice before crossing the street.
- * Wear your seatbelt and ensure that children with you are properly secured.
- * Don't use hand held devices such as cell phones or GPS units while driving.
- * Don't drink and drive.
- * Buzzed driving is Drunk Driving.
- * Please slow down. Speed kills.