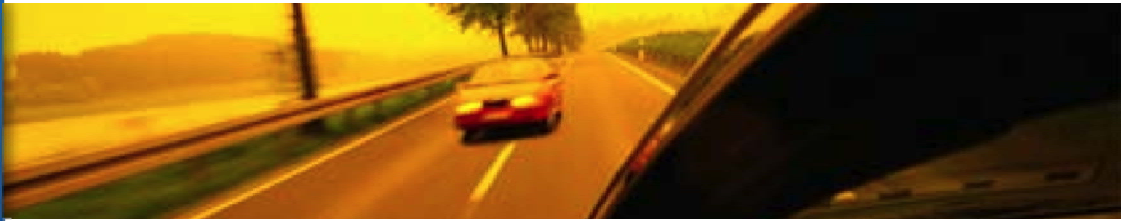


**REPORT  
DRUNK  
DRIVERS**

**CALL 911**



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## **STATE ANNOUNCES 2010 AS THE YEAR OF THE CHECKPOINT INCREASED EFFORT STARTS TONIGHT**

*MORE THAN 250 CHECKPOINTS PLANNED DECEMBER 18-JANUARY 3,  
2500 THROUGHOUT THE YEAR*

(Sacramento, Calif.) — Just in time for the upcoming holiday travel season, state traffic safety officials continued to tighten their firm grip on drunk drivers today by and declaring 2010 as “The Year of the Checkpoint” and announcing a record \$8 million in grant funding to 148 law enforcement agencies for DUI checkpoints – up from \$5 million in 2009. The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) will fund more than 2,500 sobriety checkpoints in 2010, a 47 percent increase over the 1,700 conducted this year, more than 250 of which will take place between December 18 and January 3 as part of the December DUI Crackdown enforcement campaign, *Report Drunk Drivers. Call 911.*

“To my knowledge, California conducts more checkpoints than any other state,” said OTS Director Christopher J. Murphy. “DUI checkpoints are time-tested and proven as the most effective DUI countermeasure and I’m gratified that we’re seeing the life-saving results.”

Since OTS and law enforcement began placing increased emphasis and funding toward sobriety checkpoints in 2006, alcohol-related deaths have declined in California. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s (NHTSA) Fatality Analysis Reporting System, DUI deaths declined in California by 9.1 percent between 2007 and 2008, marking a total decrease of nearly 21 percent from the most recent high point in 2005. In addition, statewide DUI arrests in 2008 were 214,811 – the highest since 1993.

“The California Highway Patrol will join more than 400 local agencies across the state over the next two weeks and throughout next year, taking part in sobriety checkpoints, saturation patrols and multi agency task force operations to get drunk drivers off the roads,” said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. “The public can help by, first and foremost, planning ahead before you celebrate and designating a non-drinking driver. If you see a drunk driver, call 911.”

(more)

All the research points to DUI checkpoints as a major contributor to the declines. When checkpoints are mounted effectively and regularly, studies have shown up to 25 percent declines in alcohol related deaths and injuries.

OTS will fund checkpoint operations by the CHP and regional 'Avoid' DUI task force programs covering 42 counties and over 400 local police departments. Increased checkpoints will target California's "Top 50 DUI Cities" with even more sobriety checkpoints in 2010. The number of OTS-funded DUI checkpoints in these 'Top 50 DUI Cities' topped out at 605 in FFY 2009. With increased funding, that number is expected to hit 975 in 2010, an increase of over 60 percent.

In addition to the checkpoints, the state's traffic safety and transportation departments are working together on multiple enforcement and public education fronts, with OTS, CHP, Caltrans, Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) and Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) all playing major roles. Among private sector partners in the effort are more than 1,300 7-Eleven stores throughout California and 115 Raley's supermarkets in Northern California that have joined the campaign to promote the *Plan Ahead. Designate a Sober Driver* message.

"We are grateful for and heartened by the support of 7-Eleven and Raley's management and employees," said Director Murphy. "By working together to encourage customers to use a sober designated driver when they celebrate, we can prevent serious DUI tragedies this holiday season."

This special campaign is one of many tactics that are part of the on-going anti-DUI effort from the California Strategic Highway Safety Plan. The plan lists the reduction of impaired driving-related fatalities as its first Challenge Area.

Grant funding from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration will be administered by the OTS through the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency. For a list of the "Top 50 DUI Cities" and 148 special DUI grant cities, visit [www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov).

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**Editors' note:** To schedule an interview regarding holiday impaired driving efforts, upcoming sobriety checkpoints and other DUI programs in California, please contact Chris Cochran at (916) 509-3063 or via email at [ccochran@ots.ca.gov](mailto:ccochran@ots.ca.gov).