

News from: **Oakland Police Department**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Oakland Police Department Receives Grant for Special Traffic Enforcement and Crash Prevention

Oakland, CA – The Oakland Police Department (OPD) has received a \$708,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS). OTS established the grant to help prevent or reduce traffic-related deaths and injuries. It will strengthen OPD’s current special enforcement activity and public awareness efforts.

The City of Oakland has an ongoing commitment to keep roadways safe. And OPD has a key role. “Let’s work together to keep Oakland roads safe for everyone,” said Oakland Police Chief Anne E. Kirkpatrick. “Remember, we share the road with drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians.”

Statistics show that since 2010, the number of people killed on California roadways has gone up 17 percent. In 2015, there were 3,429 fatalities across the state. A quarter of these resulted from vehicles hitting pedestrians or bicyclists.

What causes traffic-related deaths? Alcohol-impaired driving, speeding, intersection crashes, and distracting technologies are primary causes. Drug-impaired driving is another kind of driving under the influence (DUI). Taking prescription medications and marijuana will impair driving the same way alcohol does. And of course, combining medications and/or marijuana with alcohol increases the danger. The OTS program, “DUI Doesn’t Just Mean Booze,” is a reminder that prescription or recreational drugs can have the same effect that alcohol does.

“Unsafe behavior accounts for 94 percent of traffic crashes,” said OTS Director Rhonda Craft. “This grant emphasizes two of the most effective ways to change behaviors. And they are education and enforcement.”

The OTS grant will fund the following educational activities:

- Traffic safety educational presentations
- Specialized DUI and drugged driving training like Standardized Field Sobriety Testing (SFST) and Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement (ARIDE).

Officers will enforce the law regarding:

- Speeding
- Running red lights and/or stop signs



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- Distracted driving
- Motorcycle safety
- Seat belt and child safety seat
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety.

The Department will focus on reducing DUIs by:

- Compiling DUI “Hot Sheets” to identify worst-of-the-worst DUI offenders
- Deploying two fulltime, dedicated DUI enforcement officers
- Establishing DUI checkpoints and DUI saturation patrols.

Finally, the OPD will be able to buy traffic collision reconstruction and crash data retrieval systems. These will enhance investigations of serious traffic collisions.

Funding for this program has been provided by the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. For more information, please contact: Lieutenant Dave Elzey, OPD Traffic Operations Section, at (510) 777-8637.

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