Speed Limit Enforcement Heating Up—

During the summer, there are typically more than 900 crashes involving teen drivers each month, and illegal and unsafe speed has been one of the top three contributing factors in these crashes. Nearly 400 Minnesota law enforcement agencies will increase patrols July 10-27th to combat traffic crashes, deaths and serious injuries caused by speeding. Speed was a factor in 213 fatal crashes in the last three years (2011-2013), causing 235 fatalities and 666 serious injuries. In addition to putting other motorists at risk, speeding:

- Increases the potential for loss of vehicle control.
- Requires greater stopping distance – it takes more than the length of a football field to stop when traveling 60 mph.
- Decreases the time available for driver response and crash avoidance.
- Increases crash severity – the faster the speed, the more violent the crash.

Recent Statewide Activity and Statistics

- To-date, there have been 129 traffic deaths, four less than this time last year.
- The May 19-June 1 Click It or Ticket campaign reported 10,874 seat belt citations and 279 child restraint tickets from 329 law enforcement agencies.
- Final reports on enhanced enforcement for distracted driving during April 11-20 reported 827 texting citations from 308 law enforcement agencies.

From our Not So Smart Offender Chronicles—

Early Tuesday morning, an Owatonna officer stopped a vehicle for having loud exhaust. When speaking with the occupants, he smelled an odor of alcohol coming from within the vehicle. When the driver identified himself, the officer found the driver had a driving status of Inimical to Public Safety—a driver’s license status usually reserved for an operator with multiple alcohol related driving offenses and ordinarily results in a one-way trip to jail. The driver passed field sobriety testing; however, was arrested for the driver’s license violation. When the officer arrived at jail, jail staff notified the officer the driver was not who he was pretending to be—jail staff was familiar with the name given and the arrestee wasn’t him. The driver later provided his real name as Tyreese A. Johnson. Johnson, age 21, was formally charged with providing a false name to a police officer—a gross misdemeanor and driving after suspension.

Serial Shoplifter Arrested—

Cabela’s loss prevention called on Tuesday evening to report a shoplifter they had in custody. When our officer arrived, he found a suspect being detained for stealing approximately $1000 of Cabela’s property. The officer learned that the suspect in this case had also been into Cabela’s on June 3rd and had stolen similar type items but was not caught. When the suspect entered the store on this Tuesday, he was immediately recognized and followed by video surveillance and store staff. The suspect was observed taking items, removing the anti-theft packaging and concealing those items. The suspect was arrested for this theft—it was also learned the suspect had warrants for his arrest out of Olmsted and Douglas Counties for shoplifting. Mitchell G. Vipond, age 23, was formally charged with felony theft.

* Reprinted in part from the Minnesota Department of Public Safety

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