



SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS

SHERIFF'S OFFICE
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Sheriff

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MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 26, 2018

SEDGWICK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

WICHITA/SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS

(316) 660-3760

SGT. JUSTIN MAXFIELD

Starting Wednesday December 26th, and going through Tuesday January 1st, the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office will be participating in the Kansas Department of Transportation's (KDOT) **Taking Down DUI** Campaign. This initiative is funded by KDOT and the focus will be on driving under the influence of alcohol/drugs and occupant protection.

According to KDOT, in comparison with other holidays, the New Year's period outranks most of the other holidays in number of crashes in which at least one of the drivers is impaired by alcohol and/or other drugs. These drivers endanger not only themselves, but also others they share the vehicle and road with – such as their passengers, other motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. On average, across Kansas **three** persons are injured **every day** and **one** person is killed every **three days** in alcohol- and other drug-related crashes. Furthermore, these crashes tend to be more severe. Vehicle occupants in such crashes are **over 2 ½** times more likely to be injured or killed than those involved in crashes where alcohol or other drugs were not a factor.

Over the week following Christmas, it is projected that **250-300** drivers will be arrested for DUI (Driving Under the Influence) across the state.

M-O-R-E

A DUI arrest and conviction results in jail, the suspension or permanent revocation of driver's license, a fine of \$500 to \$2,500, participation in an alcohol or other drug treatment program and, where alcohol is involved, the purchase and installation of an ignition interlock device in the offender's vehicle. This device prevents the vehicle from starting if more than a hint of alcohol is present in the driver's breath). All of this is in addition to thousands of dollars more for bail, court costs, and attorney fees.

Also responsible for needless death and maiming is the failure by many teens and adults to simply buckle up themselves, or to properly buckle up child passengers. Twice as many Kansans who die from a crash are unrestrained as are restrained. Even worse is the fact that injuries suffered by those who are unbuckled are likely to be much more severe and disabling than injuries suffered by those who are buckled in. This applies regardless of speed, and whether the occurrence is on a city street, a county road, or a highway.

While seat belts may not always protect from serious or fatal injury, certainly no other piece of equipment within the vehicle provides more protection. The Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office remains committed to making the roadways safe for the driving public. We are asking for the public's assistance with this campaign. We are asking the public to slow down, wear their seatbelts, obey traffic control devices, and not operate a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Drivers can expect strict enforcement of all traffic laws.

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