

New Year's holiday traffic-related deaths, DUII arrests increase

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

Preliminary information gathered by Oregon State Police (OSP) and Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) indicated a slight jump in the number of traffic-related deaths and an increase in DUII arrests during this year's 102-hour New Year's holiday period between 6 p.m., Friday, December 28th, and 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, January 1, 2008. Six people died and 98 drivers were arrested for suspicion of driving under the influence of intoxicants. According to ODOT's Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS), reported fatal crashes provided by Oregon law enforcement agencies indicates six people died in five separate crashes during the period. Two of those killed were pedestrians and one fatal crash resulted in the death of a mother and her daughter. Last year during a 78-hour reporting period there were four fatalities in four separate traffic crashes. The following is a brief review of this year's New Year holiday period fatal crashes: * On December 29th at about 4:40 p.m. the body of a missing 20-year-old Grants Pass man was found by family members in his crashed vehicle off Rogue River Highway about four miles south of Rogue River.

* On December 30th at about 9:30 p.m. a female pedestrian was struck by a car as she tried to walk across Interstate 84 westbound near milepost 28. The woman has not been positively identified.

* On December 31st at about 5 p.m. a 17-year-old female was found deceased in her crashed vehicle in a creek on Cornelius Pass Road in Multnomah County.

* On December 31st at about 5:30 p.m. an 80-year old woman was struck by a car as she was walking across SE Powell Boulevard near SE 84th Avenue in Portland.

* On December 31st at shortly after 11 a.m. a crash involving two vehicles on an icy section of Highway 35 south of Odell led to three people being critically injured. Two people, a 48-year old mother and her eight-year-old daughter from West Linn, both died early January 1st at the Portland-area hospitals where they were being treated. The third person remains in critical condition. Troopers reported more DUII drivers arrested during this year's holiday period. Preliminary statistics show 98 DUII arrests, up from 81 arrests in 2006 and 88 arrests in 2005. OSP offices reporting the highest DUII arrests statistics were Springfield (ten

DUII arrests, seven of which occurred January 1st between midnight and 5:00 a.m.), Coos Bay (nine DUII arrests), Roseburg (nine DUII arrests), and Salem (nine DUII arrests). DUII arrest totals for other agencies are not included in these figures, but one interagency effort of note took place over the holiday weekend in Yamhill County. OSP troopers from the McMinnville Area Command office were joined by Yamhill County Sheriff's Deputies, Newberg Police Department, and McMinnville Police Department in a high visibility effort to deter impaired driving. The OSP Mobile DUII Processing Center (MDPC) motor home was utilized at the junction of Highway 18 and Highway 99W between the towns of Newberg and McMinnville. Officers reported numerous citizens stopped to encourage the effort and gave several favorable comments about the use of the MDPC. Prior to New Year's Day, participating agencies reported eight DUII arrests.

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