

AUGUST/LABOR DAY CRACKDOWN
LAW ENFORCEMENT PLANNER
Dadeville Police Department



The Tragedy of Drunk Driving

As police officers, we've never gotten used to the sorrow we feel when we are called to the scene of a crash where a young person has died due to impaired driving. Yet this senseless loss of human life is a daily reality all over America — year after year.

Imagine the public outrage if 29 jumbo jets — each carrying about 400 people — crashed every year in America, killing all on board. That's the equivalent of the toll our country suffers annually due to impaired driving. But where's the indignation over this catastrophe?

The fact is that impaired-driving deaths *did* decline dramatically during the 1980s through the early 1990s. Social activism, including the rise of organizations such as MADD, led to tighter laws that helped bring the death toll down. During that period, every State — plus the District of Columbia — made it illegal to drive with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 grams per deciliter or above. In addition to that, the legal drinking age was raised from 18 to 21.

Although data show that impaired driving fatalities across the country have declined by almost 10 percent in the last year, the numbers are still too high. In 2008 alone, the latest year for which we have data, nearly 12,000 people died in crashes in which a driver or motorcycle rider was at or over the legal limit (BAC of .08 g/dL or higher), according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Because we're committed to ending this tragedy, our police department Dadeville Police Department will join with others throughout the Nation during the coming Labor Day holiday for an intensive crackdown on impaired driving. This nationwide enforcement campaign is aimed at the most likely offenders, 21- to 34-year-old males. It runs from August 20 through September 6.

As police officers, our message during this crackdown and all year long is clear and unwavering: *Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.* With stepped-up law enforcement throughout the Nation — including sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols — if we catch you driving drunk, you will face serious consequences.

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