

Traffic Safety News

PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC LAW AND THE
NEW MEXICO STATE HIGHWAY AND TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT TRAFFIC SAFETY BUREAU

<http://www.unm.edu/~dgrint/tsb.html>

March 2002

Mark Your Calendars

April 12

CYFD Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws, Las Vegas, NM, Institute of Public Law, Marguerite Williamson
megsmith@unm.edu 505-277-0709

April 12

DWI Grant Council, Albuquerque
DFA, Wayne Gyulai 505-827-4991
Ruby Rael 505-827-4333, Joyce
Johnson 505-827-4179

May 2 - 3

CYFD Underage Drinking Conference
Las Cruces, Institute of Public Law
Shara Lamont 505-277-3974

May 7 - 9

Traffic Safety Summit
Albuquerque Convention Center
Patti Jones plbjones@aol.com,
505-899-2425

June 2

Motorcycle Safety Awareness Day
Albuquerque, Institute of Public
Law, Shara Lamont 505-277-3974

Summer 2002

Driver Instruction Certification
Classroom Curriculum July 15 - 19
Behind the Wheel July 22 - 26
Refresher August 9
Institute of Public Law
Shara Lamont 505-277-3974
sharas@unm.edu

Any individual with a disability who is in need of an auxiliary aid or service to attend or participate in a Traffic Safety Bureau meeting, or who needs copies of meeting materials in an accessible form, may contact the Traffic Safety Bureau at 1-800-541-7952 at least ten days before the meeting for assistance.



Yolanda Rodriguez photo

It Can Happen to Anyone

Gilbert Chavez, a lieutenant with the Eddy County Sheriff's Office, was responding with lights and siren to a residential alarm call when his vehicle was struck by a train. The Valentine's Day crash happened at 10:50 AM at a marked crossing (but without lights or barriers) in Artesia. Chavez is reported to have said that the train didn't appear to be moving and when he realized that it was, he swerved to deflect the impact. The Burlington Northern / Santa Fe engine struck the vehicle on the left side, spun it around and then impacted the right side of the sheriff's cruiser. Lt. Chavez, who considers himself lucky to be alive, suffered multiple fractures and cuts to his collarbone, left arm and leg, wrist, ribs, wingbone, forehead, nose, eye, and a punctured lung. Wishes for a speedy recovery can be sent to the Eddy County Sheriff's Office, P.O. Box 1240, Carlsbad, NM 88221.

Governor Johnson Signs Legislation

New Mexico Governor Gary Johnson signed into law Senate Bill 133 which requires ignition interlocks to be installed in the vehicles of repeat drunken drivers, and first-time offenders whose level of intoxication was twice the legal limit and above. The new law will take effect on December 31, 2002.

Governor Johnson signed House Bill 95 which doubles the fine you'll pay if you are cited for speeding in a construction zone. This law also amends the driver's license point system in that no points will be added

Continued on page 3



A Message from Traffic Safety Bureau Chief Virginia Jaramillo

children are beginning to drink more and at a younger age. And unfortunately, girls are drinking just as much as boys with catastrophic consequences as evidenced by the recent death of a young girl in Albuquerque due to acute alcohol intoxication.

Alcohol is also a contributing factor in the three top causes of death for children ages 12 - 18: accidents (including traffic fatalities and drowning), homicide and suicide.

It's our job as parents, teachers, and concerned adults to talk to our

teens about alcohol use and its consequences and to set a good example for them. The Traffic Safety Bureau supports a variety of programs to stop underage drinking including Driver Education, Campus Office of Substance Abuse, Community Driving While Impaired, and Underage Drinking Enforcement.

For more information on these programs and underage drinking, contact TSB at 1-800-541-7952.

Soon, it'll be prom night and graduation day throughout New Mexico. An exciting time for teens, and a time when teens are more likely to consume alcohol.

Alcohol is the number one drug abused by teens. According to a recent study by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse,

Two Innovative Underage Drinking Programs that Work

Prevention

To combat the problem of underage drinking on prom night in Rio Arriba County, the DWI Program visits high schools and tells students the things they need to hear - that their lives are precious, that poor decisions made at this time can impact their lives and the lives of their families and community.

Coordinators Juan Roybal and Danny Jaramillo drive home the concepts that you *can* have fun without drinking alcohol; don't drink and drive; and don't ride with someone who has been drinking. They follow up their message on prom night by stationing an adult at every entrance and exit to the prom with AlcoBlows or Intoxalyzers to prevent the use of alcohol before and during the prom. If a student has been drinking, law enforcement is on scene to detain the individual and call his/her parents.

Teens will always remember prom and Rio Arriba County is making it a night to remember for all the right reasons. Contact their DWI Program at 505-747-1418.

Treatment

The Quay County Minor in Possession Community Service Program, required for first time offenders, consists of 30 hours of alcohol education and prevention activities. It includes: youth diversion, a 15- hour life style risk reduction class that contains

information on drug abuse and alcoholism, anger management, medical complications related to alcohol abuse, the high cost of alcohol offences, relapse prevention, and alcohol and the family unit.

The New Mexico State Police teach the section on Minor in Possession and DWI laws and are also the opposing team in a basketball game against the offenders. The offenders have a handicap in that they must play basketball wearing fatal vision goggles. (Offenders have a buddy who keeps them from falling but is not allowed to play the game.) For more information on this program, contact Noreen Hendrickson at quaydwi@sr66.com or 505-461-6096.





It's a Great Day for a New Car Seat

State Police Officers R.E. Miller, David Gomez, and Robert Gribbs fill out the paper work before installing a new child safety seat as Jessica Martinez looks on. This clinic, sponsored by the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department Traffic Safety Bureau, Torrance County Teen Court, New Mexico State Police, and Safer New Mexico Now, took place February 23 in Moriarty.

For more information on car seat trainings and clinics, see Safer's web site at www.safernm.org.

Governor Signs Continued from page 1

to your license if you are cited for speeding on some "rural stretches" of highway. A rural highway is defined as a road at least two miles from a city, town or village limit, effective 5/15/02. (Bernalillo County is exempt from this law - you will still receive points on your license for speeding in rural areas there.)

Other bills signed by the Governor include House Bill 135, which allows the Secretary of Taxation and Revenue to "establish by regulation other documents that may be accepted as a substitute for a social security number" to obtain a driver's license, effective 5/15/02. House Bill 26 allows courts to depart from imposing mandatory sentences on habitual DWI offenders for substantial or compelling reasons, effective 7/1/02. House Bill 163 allows the consumption of alcoholic beverages in areas where nonprofit organizations operate gaming machines, effective 3/6/02. Governor Johnson lifted the prohibition against Christmas Day alcohol sales by signing Senate Bill 152, effective 7/1/02.

For a list of Governor Johnson's actions on legislation during the 2002 Legislative Session, see www.governor.state.nm.us. For the text of bills signed into law, check the New Mexico legislative web site at www.legis.state.nm.us.

New Mexico Traffic Fatalities

	February 2002*	February 2001
Total February Fatalities	31	27
Year to Date (YTD)	60	62
YTD Alcohol Involved	27	27
YTD No Restraints Used	23	27
YTD Teen Fatalities	5	5
YTD Teen Alcohol Involved	1	3

*2002 data is preliminary, and alcohol percentage calculations exclude unknown involvements.

Note: At the time you receive this newsletter, more recent data may have been published. Check the University of New Mexico Division of Government Research website at: <http://www.unm.edu/~dgrint/fars/thisyear.html> for updated material.

Wake Up!

Can't remember the last couple of miles you just drove? Hitting that rumble strip really startled you? You just fell asleep at the wheel.

Preventing drowsy driving and fall-asleep crashes is the goal of the National Sleep Foundation's Drive Alert - Arrive Alive National Sleep Awareness Week, April 1 - 7.

According to NSF's 2000 Omnibus Sleep in America Survey, 51% of all adults surveyed reported driving while feeling drowsy in the prior year and among 18 - 29 year olds, 24% reported falling asleep at the wheel.

"Driving while drowsy is no different than driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.," says Richard Gelula, NSF's Executive Director. "Sleepiness slows reaction time, decreases awareness and impairs judgement. Now we're finding that sleepy drivers are more tense and impatient, and may even be speeding up when they should really be stopping to rest."

To avoid being in one of the 100,000 fatigue crashes that occur annually: get a good night's sleep, drive with a companion, schedule regular stops, and avoid alcohol and medications.

For information on the Drive Alert - Arrive Alive campaign, see www.sleepfoundation.org.

* Briefs *

Another Underage Drinking Death

Felisha Holguin, a 14-year old freshman at Rio Grande High School in Albuquerque, died of acute alcohol intoxication February 23.

Holguin, another 14-year old, and two 13-year olds, were attending a supervised slumber party at an aunt's home. It's reported that after the aunt went to bed, the girls went to a neighbor's home and found someone willing to purchase vodka for them. Two of the girls didn't care for the taste, but Holguin and the other girl drank to excess. Holguin was found dead the next morning.

The Albuquerque Police Crimes Against Children Unit is investigating.

Kids at Risk in Small Pickups

Reseachers at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, who reviewed 71,000 crashes, concluded that children riding in the back seats of compact "extended cab" pickup trucks are nearly three times as likely to be hurt in a crash than children in the back seats of other vehicles.

The problem does not occur with full-size pickups with extended cabs, because they have forward facing rear seats. The problem is with the sideways seats. In a crash, children's heads hit the back of the front seats then bounce to hit the sheet metal or glass at the back of the cab. The only advice researchers were able to give parents is to use another vehicle.

To view the study, see the March 6, 2002, Journal of the American Medical Association at <http://jama.ama-assn.org>.

Las Cruces Looking at Cell Phone Ordinance

Las Cruces City Council members are considering an ordinance that will ban hand-held cell phone use by drivers. Mayor Ruben Smith has asked his staff to use the Santa Fe cell phone ordinance as a model.

Santa Fe's ordinance, which took effect January 1, makes using a hand-held cell phone while driving a petty misdemeanor punishable by a \$30.00 fine. The ordinance, which could be in place by November, is aimed at curbing driver distractions that could lead to crashes.



The *Traffic Safety News* is published monthly by the Institute of Public Law, UNM School of Law, under a federally funded project from the New Mexico State Highway and Transportation Department Traffic Safety Bureau. Contents may be republished with attribution. The contents of this newsletter are provided for informational purposes only and are not intended as an endorsement of any program or product. Address correspondence to Marguerite Williamson, Editor, UNM Institute of Public Law, 1117 Stanford NE, Albuquerque, NM 87131, phone: 505-277-0709, fax: 505-277-5483, e-mail: megsmith@unm.edu, Website: <http://www.unm.edu/~dgrint/tsb.html>.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
 INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC LAW
 1117 STANFORD NE
 ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87131

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT
 ORGANIZATION
 US POSTAGE
 PAID
 ALBUQUERQUE, NM
 PERMIT #39