

Traffic Safety News

NEW MEXICO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
TRAFFIC SAFETY BUREAU

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

May 2006

Mark Your Calendars

June 2

Driver Education Recertification Class

Provides the five year recertification class needed by ALL for-profit driver education instructors and 8 hours of continuing education needed by all DWI school facilitators, high school driver ed instructors and driving safety instructors. Contact Shara Lamont at: (505) 277-3975 or sharal@unm.edu.

June 9

New Mexico DWI School Instructor Training

Take this training to become certified to teach DWI school in New Mexico. Contact Shara Lamont at: sharal@unm.edu.

PLEASE NOTE: You must submit your application to become a certified DWI school facilitator before enrolling in this class. For information, see: <http://ipl.unm.edu/traf/certification/TOCLIC.htm>

July 10-14

Classroom Curriculum Driver Education Certification Class

This class will certify teachers to teach the classroom part of driver education to novices. Contact Shara Lamont at sharal@unm.edu or see: <http://ipl.unm.edu/traf/> for registration information.

July 17-21

Behind the Wheel Driver Education Certification Class

Continued on page 3

NM Law Enforcement Coordinators Symposium Held by Diane Swinney



Michelle Cisewski photo

I-r NMSP Chief Faron Segotta, Bernalillo County Sheriff Darren White, Safer President Lisa Kelloff, and Law Enforcement Liaisons Lanny Maddox and Leon Warren discuss NM law enforcement issues.

The annual Law Enforcement Coordinators Symposium (LECS) 2006, sponsored by the NMDOT Traffic Safety Bureau and hosted by Safer New Mexico Now, was held in Albuquerque on April 26-27 at the Sandia Resort and Casino. More than 130 representatives from New Mexico law enforcement agencies participating in Operation DWI, Operation Buckle Down, and STEP attended the symposium. The LECS provides law enforcement with the opportunity to obtain current program requirements, legal and administrative updates, and other relevant information and material.

The keynote speaker for this year's symposium was Keith D. Bushey, retired San Bernardino County, CA, Sheriff's Department Deputy Chief. Other speakers included: Dr. Benjamin Hoffman of the UNM Department of Pediatrics, New Mexico State Police Chief Faron Segotta, Albuquerque Police Chief Ray Schultz, and Bernalillo County Sheriff Darren White.

Timothy Karpoff of Karpoff & Associates and the New Mexico Law Enforcement Liaisons facilitated several breakout work sessions where the attendees representing each NMDOT district developed ideas to increase seat belt and child restraint use. Each district's work product will be submitted to TSB for further consideration.

For more information, please contact Safer New Mexico Now ODWI/OBD Program Coordinator, Nancy Kaup, at 505-856-6138.

A Message from NMDOT Secretary *Rhonda Faught*

May is Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month

Spring has sprung. The flowers are out and so are the motorcycles that have been under wraps all winter. New Mexico is beautiful in May but as more riders take to the highways, it also heralds the beginning of the motorcycle crash season.

In 2004, 1,196 motorcyclists were involved in crashes in New Mexico. Forty-four of those riders and passengers on motorcycles and ATVs died; of those, 33 were not wearing helmets. That's in addition to 893 motorcyclists who were injured in crashes, 594 of whom were not wearing helmets. In the past 5 years, the number of motorcyclists in crashes in New Mexico has steadily risen from 873 in 2000 to 1,196 in 2004.

Why Do the Numbers Continue to Rise?

There are more motorcycles on the highways: women, baby boomers and under 25s are all hitting the road on motorcycles - literally. Inexperience, a lack of training, selecting a motorcycle that's too powerful for the rider's skill level and poor judgment are all contributing to crashes. But it's not just motorcyclists that are causing crashes. More than half the time, it's the drivers of other vehicles.

Motorists often say that they just didn't see the motorcycle before they collided with it. Intersections and



David Smith photo

The MSF held 423 classes, training 3,622 riders in New Mexico last year. This one is at the old MVD office in Albuquerque.

motorists making a left turn are deadly for motorcycles. Due to their smaller size, motorcycles are easily overlooked in the traffic flow, especially if traffic is heavy or the driver is distracted, passing, or making a lane change. Motorists need to be more alert to motorcyclists and must share the road - a motorcycle is entitled to a full lane. Keeping a safe distance from a motorcycle will allow the rider an opportunity to maneuver the motorcycle to avoid road hazards and crashes.

For their part, motorcyclists should always operate their motorcycles defensively, within the rules of the road, being prepared to take evasive action if necessary. To be seen, they should wear bright colors or reflective clothing, as well as protective gear

including a motorcycle helmet. Motorcyclists must be properly licensed with a motorcycle endorsement on their driver's license and are encouraged to take the Motorcycle Safety Foundation training (offered in association with the Traffic Safety Bureau, see: www.msfsf-usa.org) for beginners and more advanced riders or another certified motorcycle training course such as the Riders Edge. Motorcyclists need to be aware that weather conditions, road surfaces and fatigue can put them in danger. They should also ensure that their motorcycle is in good operating condition and never, ever, drink and ride.


What Can You Do?

All motorists should get in the habit of looking for motorcycles as they drive: during May-Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, Motorcycle Safety Awareness Day at the Sandia Classic motorcycle races on 9/23/06, and throughout the riding season. After all, motorcyclists are dying to be seen.

**Motorcyclists
are dying to be seen**


SANDIA Classic www.sandiaclassic.net
Motorcycle Safety Awareness Day
9/23/2006

Ambien Contributing to Impaired Driving

The prescription sleeping pill Ambien® (www.ambien.com) is contributing to traffic crashes in New Mexico and throughout the US. Ginger Baker, Staff Manager of the Drug Section at the SLD Toxicology Bureau, says, "Once a new therapeutic drug begins to be prescribed regularly, we begin to detect the drug in both OMI and driving cases in our confirmation assays and general drug screens. Zolpidem (Ambien®) is a hypnotic agent prescribed for the short-term treatment of insomnia. Side effects include daytime drowsiness, dizziness, amnesia, headache and nausea. We see zolpidem in cases by itself or with a combination of other therapeutic drugs which are often CNS depressants. Police reports including officer observations and SFST are often quite compelling and consistent with the presence of this drug in the blood draw." 



What makes those observations so compelling is the tendency for Ambien® users to stare like zombies, run into stationary objects and have no memory of it. Drivers report having taken Ambien® and gone to bed, only to wake up at the police station or in a hospital. Still in their night clothes, they learn that they had been sleep driving and involved in a traffic crash. One Denver report involved a registered nurse who took Ambien® before going to bed in January 2003. She has no memory of it, but was reported to have driven her car wearing only a thin nightshirt in 20-degree weather, had a fender bender, urinated in the middle of an intersection, and then become violent with police officers. And the reports are even more bizarre when Ambien® is used, in violation of its warning label, with alcohol.

According to Ginger Baker, in 2003, there were 15 Ambien® related driving cases; in 2004, nine Ambien® related driving cases; and in data currently being processed for 2005, nine Ambien® related driving cases, one a traffic fatality, have already appeared. 

Calendar

Continued from page 1

This class will certify teachers to teach behind the wheel driver education to novices. Contact Shara Lamont at (505)277-3975 sharal@unm.edu or check: <http://ipl.unm.edu/traf/> for registration information. All previously listed classes will be held in Albuquerque.

July 19-20 Gallup

August 16-17 Albuquerque

September 12-13 Taos

Media Relations and Public Information Officer Training

Sponsored by TSB and the New Mexico Broadcasters' Association. Register online at: www.newmexicobroadcasters.org/Events/registration/media_events.php or contact Bev Allen at: (505)881-4444 or beverlyallen@nmba.org.

August 24 - 26

7th Annual National Leadership Conference on Underage Drinking Enforcement and National Liquor Law Enforcement Association Conference, Baltimore, MD
See: www.udetc.org or www.nllea.org/Conferences.htm.

Check out the UNM IPL Traffic Safety Law Center website to see the latest traffic safety training updates, calendar, and back issues of the Traffic Safety News at <http://ipl.unm.edu/traf/>.

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.

New Mexico Traffic Fatalities

March 2006* / March 2005

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Total March Fatalities | 45 | 37 |
| Year to Date (YTD) | 104 | 83 |
| YTD Alcohol Involved | 16 (15.38%) | 36 (43.37%) |
| No Restraints Used | 39 (52%) | 31 (48.43%) |
| YTD Teen Fatalities | 12 | 7 |
| YTD Teen Alcohol Involved | 3 (27.3%) | 1 (14.3%) |
| YTD Motorcycle Fatalities | 8 | 3 |
| YTD No Helmet Used | 6 | 3 |
| YTD Pedestrian Fatalities | 16 | 15 |

*2006 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.

UNM INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC LAW
MSC 11 6060
1 UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
ALBUQUERQUE, NM 87131-0001

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

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



TSB's Mike Quintana, Tammy Ryden (Buckle Up in Your Truck advocate), Kirene Bargas, and Cindy Abeyta enjoyed the Click It or Ticket Assembly, May 9th at Pojoaque High School.



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 Department of Transportation 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 "Meg" Williamson, Editor, UNM Law School Institute of Public Law, MSC 11 6060, 1 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001, phone: 505-277-0709, fax: 505-277-7064, e-mail: megwill@unm.edu, Website: <http://www.unm.edu/~dgrint/tsb.html>.

DWI Legislative Update

2006 NM Legislature

The only DWI related bill to pass the 30-day 2006 New Mexico Legislature was **HB 122 - Change Interlock Device Fund Administration**.

This new law transfers the administration of the Interlock Device Fund from the Local Government Division of the Department of Finance and Administration to the New Mexico Department of Transportation Traffic Safety Bureau (TSB). TSB will determine by rule the amount of the fee imposed on those convicted of DWI and will distribute the fees imposed to the Interlock Device Fund.

The law prohibits the imposition of the fee upon an indigent person and takes effect immediately.

Santa Fe County

Repeat drunk drivers arrested in Santa Fe County will have their vehicles seized beginning in July.

On April 25th, the Santa Fe County Commission approved an ordinance that allows the sheriff's department to seize vehicles from people who have two prior drunk driving convictions and are arrested on suspicion of a third or subsequent DWI, or for driving on a license that was revoked for DWI.

Talk Back to Big Alcohol!

The alcohol industry spends billions of dollars on advertising. It's a one-way conversation - they talk, we listen. But sometimes we don't like what we hear, especially if it sounds like an ad is targeting people too young to drink. Because of alcohol's potentially harmful effects, 81 percent of parents believe that the alcohol industry has a special responsibility to avoid exposing young people to messages encouraging alcohol consumption. If you see or hear an ad you don't like, tell them.



The Marin Institute, an alcohol industry watchdog and resource center for alcohol solutions, has a three-step system to "talk back" to Big Alcohol. You need to know when and where you saw the ad, what alcohol product it promotes, and why you feel the ad is irresponsible. You can then print a customized letter and mail it to the correct alcohol trade organization. The Marin Institute will also send the Federal Trade Commission a copy of your complaint.

See: <http://www.marininstitute.org/talkback/> for more information on "Talk Back!"