



**BUILDING
TOMORROW**

A PLAN to secure Alberta's future

December 14, 2007

Joint Forces Checkstop Pilot program shows the province's commitment to making Alberta's roads safer

Edmonton... A new pilot in the Edmonton area will see three enforcement agencies working together to reduce drunk driving.

Called the Joint Forces Pilot Impaired Checkstop program, the pilot will be the first time the Edmonton Police Service, RCMP and Alberta's Sheriffs will combine forces to increase the number of checkstops in Edmonton and surrounding areas. This program complements existing Checkstop programs and increases enforcement of existing traffic laws dealing with impaired driving and related offences.

The pilot project, ending on March 31, 2008, will collect information for analysis such as the number of vehicles checked; impaired charges; 24 hour suspensions; driving with no insurance or registration and other criminal and provincial offences.

"Our traffic safety partners will use their strengths and resources to help reduce the number of incidents involving drinking and driving on our roads," said Luke Ouellette, Minister of Alberta Infrastructure and Transportation. "Drinking and driving affects too many lives – it's simply not acceptable."

"Reducing the number of injuries and fatalities due to drinking and driving is a priority for the Government of Alberta, and increased joint enforcement is an important tool to make this happen," said Fred Lindsay, Solicitor General and Minister of Public Security. "Partnerships in law enforcement, like we see in this pilot project, are an effective way to keep our roads safe for all Albertans."

"The RCMP is proud to be teaming up with the Edmonton Police Services and Alberta Sheriffs to conduct enhanced enforcement to get impaired drivers off our road. Impaired drivers pose a serious risk to their safety and to the safety of others, said Inspector James Stiles, Officer in Charge, RCMP "K" Division Traffic Services. "The police are committed to reducing the harm caused by impaired drivers. Our message is simple: If you plan to drink, plan for safe transportation, and never get behind the wheel after consuming alcohol or drugs."

"This pilot project is an opportunity to partner with other police agencies in the Edmonton area to show the importance of ridding our roads of impaired drivers," said S/Sgt. Bill Horne of the Edmonton Police Service, Traffic Section. "We also want to inform the public that the issue of impaired driving isn't exclusive to Christmas, but instead is a year round concern."

In Alberta, being legally impaired means a blood alcohol reading at or above .08. Individuals can also be charged if they refuse to provide a breath or blood sample. That said, impairment can occur at much lower levels, which means a person could be impaired even after only one or two drinks. Collisions causing injury or deaths, arrests, suspensions, criminal records, higher vehicle insurance costs and possible jail terms are the consequences of this crime.

Albertans who suspect a motorist is driving while impaired can report the incident to the local police service by calling 911. Have the following information ready: location and direction of travel of the suspected impaired driver; time of observation; licence plate number; make, model, colour and any additional information about the vehicle; and description of the driver.

Improving traffic safety is part of Premier Ed Stelmach's plan to secure Alberta's future by building safe communities, greening our growth and creating opportunity.

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To call toll-free within Alberta dial 310-0000.

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In 2006, over 22 per cent of driver's in fatal collisions had consumed alcohol prior to the crash compared to four per cent of drivers in injury collisions. The majority of drinking drivers were male from the age of 18 to 24 years.

On average, approximately 7,700 people are convicted of impaired driving in Alberta each year. The Alberta Administrative Licence Suspension (AALS) ensures that drivers charged with an alcohol-related offence will face an automatic suspension of their driving privileges – no conviction is necessary. AALS includes:

- immediate 24-hour licence suspension;
- automatic three-month licence suspension or disqualification for providing a breath or blood sample greater than .08 or refusing to provide a breath or blood sample;
- Automatic six month licence suspension or disqualification if the offense results in bodily harm or death;
- A 21-day temporary permit to allow the driver to set his or her affairs in order.

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