



# MARSHALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## **4th of July Traffic Enforcement**

- June 29, 2017:

Extra enforcement for July 4th holiday travel.

The July 4th holiday is quickly approaching. Like many other holidays, this leads to an increased number of vehicles on our roadways. Unfortunately, too many of those drivers will make the choice to drive distracted or under the influence of drugs or alcohol. According to Iowa DOT crash statistics, the July 4th holiday period (July 2-6) resulted in five fatality crashes in Iowa in both 2015 and 2016. In 2015, three of those five crashes involved impaired drivers, and four out of five in 2016 were impaired. Anyone who is planning on celebrating with alcohol should make arrangements to utilize a designated driver, taxi, or Uber. Remember to "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over".

The Marshall County Sheriff's Office and Marshalltown Police Department will be joining law enforcement agencies all across Iowa and the Midwest to provide extra traffic enforcement focused on detecting and apprehending impaired drivers. While impaired driving is the focus of the increased patrols, other dangerous driving behaviors such as speeding, unbuckled occupants, and distracted driving will also be addressed and enforced.

Nearly everyone agrees distracted driving is becoming a big problem on our roadways. Starting July 1st, Iowa's new texting and driving law takes effect. While most people understand that this bill addresses texting and driving, many don't realize that the new law does not only address text messages on phones. The law states that "A person shall not use a hand-held electronic communication device to write, send, or view an electronic message while driving a motor vehicle unless the motor vehicle is at a complete stop off the traveled portion of the roadway." It is important to note according to the definitions in the law that electronic message "includes images visible on the screen of a hand-held electronic communication device including a text-based message, an instant message, a portion of electronic mail, an internet site, a social media application, or a game."

With the previous law, this was a secondary offense which means that officers could not stop violators for that violation alone. However, on July 1st, the new law makes this violation a primary offense that officers can stop and enforce for that violation alone. With distracted driving becoming an epidemic that is leading to more crashes and injuries, drivers should expect this law to be strictly enforced.

The Marshall County Sheriff's Office and Marshalltown Police Department remind motorists to have a safe holiday while traveling our roadways.

**About Marshall County Sheriff's Office**

The Marshall County, Iowa Sheriff's Office is lead by Sheriff Steve Hoffman. Sheriff Hoffman is committed to keeping communities and neighborhoods safe in Marshall County.

For additional information or a sample copy, contact:

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