

COMMUNITY COMMENT, DECEMBER 11, 2012

This is Officer Matt Harvey with the California Highway Patrol for community comment.

Designated drivers, buckled-up vehicle occupants, and undistracted motorists adhering to the speed limit along Humboldt County's roadways are just a few of the items that appear on the California Highway Patrol's wish list this Christmas season.

The Christmas season is a time of celebration with family, friends and co-workers. Often, those holiday festivities involve travel, whether it's to a relative's house, home from the office Christmas party, or even just a quick trip to the store for a last-minute purchase.

This time of year more people travel, celebrations increase, and the weather can be a challenge.

As you prepare for holiday travels and winter weather, remember to plan ahead and leave yourself some extra time to make the trip. Regardless of what brings you out on the roadways this year, rest assure that the CHP will be out there to assist you whenever there is a need.

Drivers are reminded to always wear seatbelts, put children in appropriate safety seats, drive at a safe speed for various conditions, and never drink and drive during this holiday season.

If your celebration involves alcohol, please designate a non-drinking driver. As a reminder, the legal limit for alcoholic beverage consumption for drivers 21 years and older is a .08% blood alcohol content. But even with a lower blood alcohol content, a driver may still be a hazard and can still be arrested.

We want to make sure everyone enjoy their festivities. Therefore, our goal is to ensure you and your loved ones arrive at your destination safely.

This year, the CHP is committed to keeping motorists safe while traveling Humboldt County's roadways. CHP officers will be on patrol throughout Humboldt County to ensure motorists celebrate the holidays in a safe, responsible manner. On Friday, Dec. 21st, the CHP begins its Christmas Maximum Enforcement Period, which continues through Tuesday, December 25th. During this period, CHP officers throughout the state plan for increased visible presence by deploying special enforcement teams, in addition to those CHP officers who are already scheduled to work.

Last year during the CHP's Christmas holiday enforcement effort, I am pleased to report that there were no fatal collisions in Humboldt County within CHP's jurisdiction. CHP officers responded to a total of 11 injury and non-injury traffic collisions within Humboldt County and made multiple arrests for driving under the influence.

The CHP will conduct a similar holiday enforcement effort during the New Year's weekend which begins Monday, Dec. 31st and continues through Tuesday, Jan. 1st.

While traveling this Christmas season, if you encounter a potential DUI driver or any other immediate hazard, please notify law enforcement immediately by dialing 911. For additional information regarding the CHP's Maximum Enforcement Period or any non-emergency, you can contact the California Highway Patrol at 1-800-TELL-CHP.

This has been Officer Matt Harvey with the California Highway Patrol for Community Comment.