



Ortonville Police Department

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OBEY THE SIGN, OR PAY THE FINE — EXTRA JULY SPEED PATROLS IN JULY

Clear roads on the freeway during the summer don't give drivers a free-pass to speed. In July, Ortonville motorists will face enhanced speed enforcement patrols as part of a statewide campaign coordinated by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety.

In Big Stone County, an average speeding citation for 10 mph over the limit is \$125. Motorists stopped at 20 mph over the speed limit face double the fine, and those ticketed traveling more than 100 mph can lose their license for six months.

Speed is the most commonly reported contributing factor in fatal crashes.

"It's unfortunate that many drivers don't recognize speeding as a serious safety issue," says Chief of Police Jason Mork. "When your speed increases, so does the risk for a violent crash, as does your risk of a ticket."

Ortonville Police Department cites the dangers of speeding include greater potential for loss of vehicle control; increased stopping distance; less time available for driver response for crash avoidance; and increased crash severity leading to more numerous and severe injuries.

More than twice as many speed-related fatal crashes occur on rural roads than major urban roads.

Another safety concern is the record-high number of motorcyclists on the road. Chief Mork says a major factor in rider deaths are unsafe speeds — more than half of all motorcycle crashes are single-vehicle events in which the rider loses control of the bike and runs off the road or crashes. He stresses for motorists to look twice for riders — especially at intersections — because motorcycles are smaller, their speeds and distance can be harder to gauge.

Chief Mork says with warm weather comes an increase in speeding behavior, an important reminder to motorists in the heart of the summer driving season — the deadliest time on Minnesota roads. He also

notes to keep a three-second following distance to avoid tailgating and other aggressive driving behaviors such as running lights, breezing through stop signs and unsafe passing.

“We are all in a rush and have places to be, but that doesn’t mean you can throw common sense driving out the window,” Chief Mork stated. “This campaign is about preventing tragedies that don’t have to occur if we drive at safe speeds and have some patience behind the wheel.”

The speed enforcement and education effort is coordinated by the Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety. The campaign is a component of the state’s *Toward Zero Death* program (*TZD*). A primary vision of the *TZD* program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. *TZD* focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes — education, enforcement, engineering and emergency trauma response.

Obey the Sign. Or Pay the Fine.

“To Serve and Protect”