

Waushara County Sheriff's Department

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NEWS RELEASE

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading causes of death for young people 15-20 years of age. In 2006, traffic crashes claimed the lives of 88 teens ages 16 to 19. That compares to 98 who were killed in 2005, 85 who were killed in 2004, 113 who were killed in 2003 and 109 killed in 2002. Yet, in 2006 these drivers accounted for 14% of all drivers in crashes and they accounted for 10% of all drivers in crashes who were listed as "had been drinking". Consumption of alcohol increases the probability of poor decision making.

The Waushara County Sheriff's Department is participating in a Youth Alcohol Enforcement Project during 2008. The objectives of this project include:

- To decrease the number of underage drinkers killed and seriously injured in motor vehicle crashes.
- To decrease the number of underage drinking parties.
- To increase the number of youth that law enforcement officers have positive contact with at community activities and events.

The Waushara County Sheriff's Department will employ three strategies in their effort to reach their goals:

1. They will continue to actively be involved in establishing positive contacts with young people at community events and provide factual information to youth pertaining to drinking and driving.
2. They will assign deputies to target identified areas where underage drinking is likely to occur and vigorously enforce the laws pertaining to alcohol consumption and driving.
3. They will conduct checks of licensed premises to ensure that the laws regulating the sale of alcohol are being followed.

The pain and suffering caused by traffic crashes, injuries and death related to the misuse of alcohol affects the entire community. In a small community such as Waushara County it is uncomfortable for a deputy to tell a parent that their child has been drinking, but that feeling pales in comparison to the gut wrenching pain that is felt when news of a death has to be delivered.

Enjoy your activities with friends. Have fun, but be responsible.

Sheriff David Peterson