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Enhanced Traffic Enforcement

The Sarasota County Sheriff's Office will be out in force Wednesday in an effort to make the area's most dangerous intersections and roadways safer for all.

Traffic enforcement efforts will be significantly enhanced with patrols set up at numerous locations throughout the county. This is a department-wide effort with all available personnel participating.

Sarasota County is on pace this year to have the highest traffic fatality rate since 2000. Sheriff Tom Knight wants to stop that trend in its tracks.

"Traffic issues such as speeding and red-light runners are frequent citizen complaints," said Sheriff Knight. "The goal of today's ramped-up enforcement is to remind drivers that traffic enforcement is a priority for the Sheriff's office and this community."

The Sheriff's Office also will be educating drivers about the new seat belt law, which makes not wearing a seatbelt a primary offense. During this initiative, however, seat belt violators will receive warnings along with safety information.

Sarasota County Traffic Statistics through May 2009:

- There have been 35 traffic fatalities this year, up 218% over this time last year.
- Sarasota County law enforcement agencies responded to 687 traffic crashes in May 2009.
- DUI arrests by the Sheriff's Office are up 31% year-to-date, for a total of 594 cases so far in 2009.

It is also important to note that in Florida, violation of right-of-way or disregarding a traffic signal is a contributing cause for 24% of all crashes involving injury and death.