



pennsylvania
STATE POLICE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 29, 2022

Wolf Administration Highlights Responsible Celebration Ahead of Independence Day Holiday Weekend

Harrisburg, PA – The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), Pennsylvania State Police (PSP), Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission held a media event today urging safe and responsible celebration this coming holiday weekend, and always.

"Independence Day is a time for celebration, but before heading out to these celebrations we urge Pennsylvanians to keep safety in mind," said PennDOT Acting Deputy Secretary for Highway Administration Mike Keiser. "If your celebration includes alcohol, plan ahead by designating a sober driver or arranging for alternate transportation. Never drive impaired."

According to PennDOT data, in 2021 there were 136 alcohol-related crashes from Friday, July 2 through Monday, July 5, resulting in six fatalities. Also, during the holiday period last year, there were 48 drug-related crashes, resulting in four fatalities.

Data from the Fish and Boat Commission shows that there were 49 boating-under-the-influence arrests in 2021, a decrease from 60 in 2020.

Pennsylvania is a boating destination state, and boaters drive to and from their boating location. When an impaired boat operator gets behind the wheel to drive home, a BUI becomes a DUI.

"Alcohol impairs judgment, balance, and reaction time on the water and boating under the influence puts everyone at risk, including passengers and others enjoying the water," said PA Fish and Boat Commission Executive Director Tim Schaeffer.

"Our goal is for boaters to have a safe and enjoyable time on the water. This begins with safe boating practices that include wearing a life jacket each and every time they're on a boat, and not drinking while boating," he added.

Over this holiday period, the Pennsylvania State Police and local law enforcement will conduct checkpoints and roving patrols. This effort is funded through PennDOT's statewide annual distribution of more than \$4.7 million from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for impaired driving enforcement.

“PSP and its local law enforcement partners have zero tolerance toward impaired, aggressive and distracted driving, as well as speeding,” said PSP Commissioner Colonel Robert Evanchick. “Wherever you travel this holiday weekend, please slow down, buckle up, and drive safely.”

DCNR manages 121 state parks and 2.2 million acres of state forest lands that permit recreational activities including boating and ATV riding. Pennsylvania ranks top 5 in the U.S. for ATV crashes, with many of those incidents involving alcohol, which is not permitted on public lands. DCNR encourages all visitors to practice safe behavior, follow recreation guidelines, and to comply with all posted safety signage.

“Riding ATVs is just like driving a vehicle, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol is not permitted while operating an ATV,” said DCNR Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn. “Whether you’re riding an ATV or taking a walk in Penn’s Woods, safety is key when recreating during the holidays and throughout the year. Many of the worst accidents at state parks and forests occur when people do not follow guidelines in place, which is why we encourage all visitors to practice safe behavior while visiting public lands.”

If you have plans for travel this holiday weekend, “Know Before You Go” by checking the [511PA “Holiday Travel Restrictions” page](#). While PennDOT will remove lane restrictions and suspend construction projects wherever possible, the “Holiday Travel Restrictions” page allows the public to view interstate restrictions that will be in place during the holiday travel period.

The public can check conditions on more than 40,000 roadway miles in Pennsylvania by visiting www.511PA.com. The service, which is free and available 24 hours a day, provides traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, traffic speed information, and access to more than 1,000 traffic cameras. 511PA is also available through a smartphone application for iPhone and Android devices, by calling 5-1-1, or by following regional Twitter alerts accessible on the 511PA website.

To learn more about PennDOT’s efforts to prevent impaired driving or other safety initiatives, visit www.PennDOT.pa.gov/Safety.

For more information on the Pennsylvania State Police, visit psp.pa.gov.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, visit fishandboat.com.

For more information about [state parks](#) and [state forests](#), visit the [DCNR website](#).

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