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Law enforcement put the brakes on speeding

More than 2,900 tickets issued in effort to curb risky-driving behavior

To help combat an alarming rise in speeding and fatal crashes on Michigan roadways, dozens of law enforcement agencies across the state recently issued 2,941 speeding citations and 2,353 warnings as part of a regional traffic safety initiative.

The Michigan Office of Highway Safety Planning (OHSP) and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Region 5 Office partnered with five other states (Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin) as part of the "Great Lakes, High Stakes" campaign. From June 19 to June 27, more than 50 municipal, county and Michigan State Police (MSP) law enforcement agencies focused on stopping speeding drivers.



"This effort is a wake-up call about the significance of traffic safety," said Michael L. Prince, director of the OHSP. "Speed kills. This campaign has been a timely reminder about the need to educate motorists about the importance of obeying the speed limit and the value of enforcing the laws already on the books."

Preliminary numbers show that in addition to the speeding citations and speed-violation warnings, there were also 314 seat belt violation citations issued. Among motorists taken off the roads were 109 drivers arrested for Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) and 25 arrested for Operating Under the Influence of Drugs (OUID).

Law enforcement agencies cited numerous examples of risky and dangerous driving:

- During nine traffic stops by the MSP Grand Rapids Post in a 55 mph zone, all of the motorists were driving 70 mph or more.
- The Hazel Park Police Department reported that of the 111 speeding citations issued, two were for 20 to 24 mph over the speed limit; four were for 25 to 29 mph over the speed limit; five for 30 to 39 mph over; one for 40 mph over; and one for 60 mph over the speed limit (100 mph in a 40).
- The Chippewa County Sheriff's Office reported a semi-truck going 86 mph on M-28.

While Michigan has seen a 22 percent reduction in traffic crashes - 245,432 in 2020 compared to 314,377 in 2019 - there has been a spike in fatalities. Crash data from the MSP Criminal Justice Information Center indicates 1,083 people died from crashes on Michigan roads in 2020, a 10 percent increase over 2019, when 985 deaths were reported. In 2020, there were 200 speed-related fatalities on Michigan roadways compared to 185 in 2019, an 8 percent increase.

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