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Missouri drivers sweat as the HEAT approaches this summer

Campaign will kick off with Interstate 70 corridor project June 25-26

With summer heating up, an increasing number of Missourians are headed for some fun summer traveling. Unfortunately, the increase in travel brings a rise in traffic-related accidents and fatalities. State and local law enforcement officers all over the state are putting in extra time to make our roads safer in the height of travel season.

The three-month “HEAT Is On” campaign will run June 21-September 21 and will kick off with an Interstate 70 corridor project on June 25-26. Other statewide efforts will be seen along Interstate 44 on September 18-19 and Interstate 270 throughout the summer.

Law enforcement will be on the lookout for speeders, drivers who aren't wearing seat belts, and those who are impaired. Sweating from summer temperatures may not be the only HEAT-related experience these drivers will encounter. For the past four years, Missouri has recorded the highest number of fatal and serious injury crashes between July and September. In the summer of 2009, 239 people were killed and 1,847 suffered disabling injuries.

While these numbers are disheartening, highway deaths overall are steadily decreasing. When 2010 comes to a close, Missouri hopes to see an even bigger decrease as the result of initiatives of the HEAT campaign from this summer.

“Our goal is to lower fatalities to 850 or fewer by 2012. And in order to do that we must prevent the spike in fatalities between July and September,” said Leanna Depue, chair of the executive committee of the Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety. “It’s all about saving lives.”

“Ignoring speed limits and seat belts along with drinking and driving puts the lives of all highway drivers in danger. We hope the HEAT campaign will encourage Missouri drivers to take the necessary precautions when heading to the roads this summer,” said Depue

Along with the increased enforcement on Missouri’s highways, the HEAT campaign will also spread safe driving messages through radio advertisements and internet videos. Find out more at

www.saveMOLives.com.

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