



OFFICE OF THE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

COUNTY OF SHASTA

Robert J. Maloney
Assistant District Attorney

Gerald C. Benito
District Attorney

PRESS RELEASE

SHASTA COUNTY SECOND BEST IN STATE
April 14, 2009

The California Department of Motor Vehicles released its 2009 annual report on Driving Under the Influence cases in all 58 counties. The report covers the years 2006 and 2007. According to the report, Shasta County had the highest increase in DUI arrests in the state between 2006 and 2007. That increase was from 1276 arrests in 2006 to 1796 arrests in 2007- a 40.8% increase. This is undoubtedly due to the dedication of 2 Redding Police Officers to DUI enforcement and heightened enforcement by the California Highway Patrol, the Anderson Police Department, the Shasta County Probation Department, the Shasta County Sheriff's Office and the Redding Police Department through the AVOID the 5 campaign during those years. The grant which funded the additional RPD officers ended January of this year. The increase of DUI arrests from 2005 to 2007 was from 891 arrests to 1796- an increase of over 100%.

The report also tracks conviction rates for DUI offenses. The state average conviction rate for DUI offenses in 2006 was 79.4%. This number represents the percentage of those arrested who were ultimately convicted of an alcohol driving offense. Shasta County's conviction rate for 2006 arrests was 96.9% which is the second highest conviction rate in the state. Of all 58 counties, only Placer County had a higher conviction rate of 99.2%. Shasta County's conviction rate represents an approximately 10% increase in the conviction rate over 2004. The increased conviction rate is indicative of better investigated DUI cases by law enforcement and higher quality prosecutions coupled with a tougher stand on DUI cases by the Shasta County District Attorney's Office.

The report also noted a significant decrease in the number of second time DUI offenders who became involved in a traffic collision within one year of their DUI conviction. In 2004, 6.2% of second time DUI offenders were involved in a collision. In 2006, only 2% of these offenders were involved in a traffic collision within one year of their conviction. Among the factors noted above, the decrease in collisions following second DUI offenses may be related to the increase in the supervision by the Shasta County Probation Department, the increased use of Ignition Interlock Devices for these offenses requested by the District Attorney's Office and implemented by the Superior Court of Shasta County. In 2006, 74.5% of 2nd time offenders are ordered to install the device. In 2004, approximately 64% were ordered to install the device.

Other statewide numbers of significance are as follows:

- Of those arrested for DUI in 2006, 75% were first time offenders, and 26.5% were repeat offenders.
- The median age of those arrested for DUI is 30 years.
- The median blood alcohol level was .15% which is nearly twice the legal limit of .08%.
- 15.5% of DUI arrests were associated with a reported traffic collision.
- Alcohol related DUI fatalities in 2007 decreased for the first time after nearly 8 years of increase.
- Drug related DUI fatalities in 2007 have declined slightly for the second year in a row, but still remain nearly 200% higher than the past decade.

For questions or additional information about the statistics, contact District Attorney Jerry Benito at 245-6310. Questions regarding Redding Police Department's efforts may be directed to Redding Police Chief Peter Hansen.