



100 YEARS OF COVERAGE, AND COUNTING.



News Release

July 31, 2006

Stay alert, sober and buckled-up this B.C. Day long weekend, urges BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation

(Burnaby, B.C.): It's the most deadly time of the most deadly season. On average, one person dies every day on B.C. roads and 80 people are injured – but this number doubles or even triples each day during summer long weekends. The BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation says avoiding a road tragedy this B.C. Day long weekend may be as simple as staying alert, sober and buckling-up.

According to B.C. Traffic Collision Statistics, five people died and 305 people were injured during the B.C. Day long weekend in 2004 (the most recent data available). The worst long weekend for summer traffic collisions is Labour Day, averaging 286 injuries and five deaths over the past six years.

BCAA statistics indicate that British Columbians are continuing to head out on the road this summer with online “Trip Tik” route planning requests up 13 per cent last month compared to the same time last year. Top B.C. destinations include the Thompson Okanagan, Vancouver Island and the Kootenays. Those travelling farther are favouring California, Alberta, Ontario and Nova Scotia.

BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation says there are specifically four areas where drivers can have the most influence on safety, especially during this busy holiday weekend:

1. **Keep your hands on the wheel and your mind on the road.** According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the many forms of distracted driving are collectively responsible for as many as eight out of every ten crashes. Distraction can stem from anywhere in or outside the vehicle – anything that reduces the driver's awareness, decision-making, and/or performance on the road.
2. **Stay alert and take regular breaks.** Motorists in a hurry to get to their destination often push on and drive through dinner and much-needed rest stops. Eyes closing or losing focus, continuous yawning and drifting between lanes are all danger signs of drowsy driving. Stay alert by getting enough sleep before a trip and take a break every two hours or every 160 km.

-More-

3. **If you're going to drink, don't drive.** According to latest B.C. Traffic Collision Statistics, the greatest number of impaired driving collisions occur during the summer. Festivals, barbecues and vacation activities during good weather are often combined with a drink or two. But good weather and good times don't give anyone a license to drink and drive.
4. **Buckle-up.** Ensure everyone is buckled up in an age-appropriate restraint. By law, children up to 40 lb (18 kg) must be in a child seat, but research shows that it's just as important for children aged four-to-eight or weighing less than 80 lb (36 kg) to be in a booster seat. Studies show booster seats can substantially reduce the risk of death and serious injuries by up to 60 per cent over vehicle seat belts alone - yet studies indicate that only 18 per cent of children in this category are being placed in them. For more information or advice on how to properly secure your child, call BCAA's Child Passenger toll-free line at 1-877-247-5551.

###

About BCAA

BCAA is the province's largest member services association, working on behalf of its 750,000 members to represent their interests and connect them with a team of automotive, travel and insurance professionals dedicated to serving their needs. BCAA has assets of \$158 million, and operates 24 sales centres and two province-wide customer contact centres. BCAA is one of the top three travel agencies, and one of the half-dozen largest providers of home insurance in B.C. To learn more about BCAA's products, services and member advocacy, visit www.bcaa.com.

About BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation

The BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation (TSF) is a non-profit registered charity working with families, communities and business partners to reduce the number and severity of traffic crashes and injuries in B.C. For more information contact visit www.tsf-bcaa.com or call the Child Passenger Safety Information Line 1-877-247-5551.

-30-

Editors notes:

B-roll available of crash test dummy with no booster seat / lap and shoulder belt only.

For further information, please contact:

Jennifer Timm
Coordinator, BCAA Media Relations
Tel: (604) 268-5342
Cell: (778) 228 8859
E-mail: jennifer.timm@bcaa.com

Allan Lamb
Executive Director, BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation
Tel: (604) 297-2151
Cell: (604) 230 6159
E-mail: allanl@tsf-bcaa.com