



MEDIA RELEASE

This summer stay straight and save a life – don't drink and drive

Burnaby, BC / May 18, 2010 – The May long weekend is the first of many over the summer that will see crashes caused by impaired drivers.

The BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation has a message – if you consume alcohol or drugs do not get behind the steering wheel of a vehicle.

“Now is when we begin to see an increase in impaired driving, especially in those drivers coming from private functions such as barbeques and golf tournaments,” says Allan Lamb, executive director of the BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation.

Lamb adds that since 2007, June has had the highest number of impaired driving incidents, followed by July and March, “this represents a shift from prior years where alcohol related collisions were highest in the fall and during the Christmas season.”

On average two people die every week and 60 people are seriously injured in B.C. due to impaired driving.

Programs like Drinking Driving CounterAttack and Operation Red Nose have been effective in increasing public awareness and reducing the number of impaired drivers on the roads during the holiday season, but it is time to focus on the summer months as well.

The recent announcement by the provincial government indicates that the anti impaired driving message is moving to a new level.

The Province is introducing Canada's most immediate and severe impaired driving penalties to save lives, curb repeat offenders and give police more enforcement tools by introducing an immediate 90-day driving ban and a \$500 fine for drivers who provide a failing breath sample above 0.08 per cent BAC or refuse to provide a breath sample at the roadside.

Drivers caught in the “warning” range between 0.05 and 0.08 per cent BAC within a five year period will face an immediate, three-day driving ban and a \$200 fine for the first offence; a seven-day ban and a \$300 fine for the second; and a 30-day ban and a \$400 fine for the third.

“The BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation is pleased that the police will have these tools to be able to get the real work done,” commented Lamb. “We have recently honoured 175 police officers from around the province as members of Alexa's Team for their diligence in apprehending over 9,000 impaired drivers in the last year.”

It isn't just the responsibility of the police and the government says Lamb, “we as a community are responsible for bringing an end to impaired driving. It is the responsibility

of the driver in the first place, but it is also the responsibility of hosts, friends and family not to let an individual drive a vehicle if they are impaired by alcohol or drugs.”

More information about changes to impaired driving laws is available at www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/osmv/ online.

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About BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation

The BCAA Traffic Safety Foundation 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 visit www.BCAATSF.ca or call 604-298-5107.

DRIVE TO SAVE LIVES

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