

Mark C. Curran Jr. Sheriff
Raymond J. Rose Undersheriff

MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Date: July 26, 2016
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**Sheriff Mark Curran and Circuit Clerk Keith Brin Launch
County-Wide #DropItAndDrive Campaign**

On July 26, 2016, Lake County Sheriff Mark Curran, Undersheriff Ray Rose, Circuit Clerk Keith Brin, and Aaron S. Epstein, MD, Northwestern Medicine, held a press conference to discuss the '100 deadliest days' of driving. They were joined by the Lake County Chiefs of Police Association, Lake County Department of Transportation, and AAA. The '100 deadliest days' is the period of time between Memorial Day and Labor Day when teen car crashes are at their highest.

According to AAA's Foundation for Traffic Safety, crashes involving drivers ages 16-19 increased 16% during the "100 deadliest days," compared to other days of the year. Additionally, AAA statistics show six out of 10 teen crashes involve driver distraction. These statistics can be reduced through education and enforcement.

Lake County Law Enforcement and our traffic safety partners will be working collaboratively to educate motorists about the dangers of texting and driving and traffic safety patrols will be enforcing the cell phone ban during the "Drop It And Drive/Stay Alive" campaign beginning today and continuing through Labor Day.

Circuit Clerk Keith Brin stated, “Our office is the central clearing house for citations issued throughout the County and unfortunately for those cases resulting in the loss of life. The numbers both locally and nationally reflect a need to take action on this public safety issue and public health epidemic.”

“It takes only one text to change a car ride with friends into a serious or deadly car accident,” said Aaron S. Epstein, MD, the medical director of the Northwestern Medicine Lake Forest emergency department and Grayslake Outpatient Center.

“Distracted driving is a top public health concern because of the growing number of vehicle accidents that result from unfocused drivers,” Epstein said. “As an emergency medicine physician, I see the results of distracted driving -- car accident victims who come to our trauma unit. Many times, they are teenagers and young drivers who just don’t understand the forever consequences of not paying attention to the road for a few seconds.”

“Just like wearing seat belts has become the norm, so too should putting away cell phones before getting behind the wheel,” Epstein said.

“Tragedies are so much worse when they could have been avoided,” Epstein said. “Texting while driving is 100 percent avoidable.”

Sheriff Mark Curran noted the support of local law enforcement “from Antioch to Highland Park, Kildeer and Lake Zurich to Libertyville as well as Round Lake and Round Lake Park – this is a county-wide campaign with many partners and the campaign to end texting and driving begins **today**. This campaign will save lives and hefty fines,” Curran added, referencing the average cost of a citation including court costs at nearly \$250.

Undersheriff Ray Rose concluded the press conference with a challenge to the public, “and now we challenge you, the community to join us; parents speak to your kids, coaches and teachers speak to your students – join us and set the example - Drop It And Drive/Stay Alive.”

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