



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Release: IMMEDIATE  
Date: June 29, 2006  
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**LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS LAUNCH "BOOZE IT & LOSE IT" CAMPAIGN**

**RALEIGH** — Law enforcement officers from across the state are going to great heights to stop impaired driving as they kicked off "Operation Firecracker," the Fourth of July holiday week "Booze It & Lose It" enforcement campaign at the top of Mount Mitchell today.

Darrell Jernigan, director of the Governor's Highway Safety Program, joined Yancey County Sheriff Kermit Banks and Miss North Carolina USA Samantha Holvey to encourage motorists to make the right decision during the holiday and not drive after drinking.

"As folks celebrate our nation's independence with friends and family this Fourth of July, we want remind them to do so responsibly," said Jernigan. "During the next week, expect to see officers out in full force, cracking down on impaired drivers."

Alcohol-related traffic crashes are a consistent holiday occurrence. In 2005, 41 North Carolina motorists were involved in fatal traffic crashes during the week of Independence Day. Sixteen of those fatalities were alcohol-related. Alcohol-related crashes also accounted for 225 injuries in the state during the same week last year.

The high-visibility enforcement effort begins June 29 and will continue until July 9. Officers will conduct checkpoints statewide throughout the campaign. Buncombe and Alamance counties will hold Friday evening checkpoints featuring Breath Alcohol Testing mobile units, better known as BATMobiles.

More than 12,500 North Carolina motorists were charged with driving while impaired during 2005 highway safety campaigns. "Operation Firecracker" is the first of several "Booze It & Lose It" campaigns scheduled this year.

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*For information about "Booze It & Lose It" or other North Carolina highway safety issues, contact Beth Horner at 919-733-3083, or visit their Web site at: [www.ncdot.org/secretary/GHSP](http://www.ncdot.org/secretary/GHSP).*