

# **HIGHWAY SAFETY CHALLENGE**



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## **SLOW DOWN THIS MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND TO SAVE GAS, SAVE MONEY AND SAVE LIVES**

Virginians have three main reasons to slow down and comply with speed limits while traveling during the Memorial Day weekend:

- 1) To save gas. Driving too fast is not only reckless, but also uses up more gas. Drive the speed limit and conserve on fuel.
- 2) To save money. Fewer trips to the gas pump mean more savings. Tickets cost money, too. State police will be out in full force during the holiday weekend patrolling for speeders and aggressive drivers.
- 3) To save lives. In 2007, speed accounted for 19 percent of all crashes involving injuries and fatalities in Virginia.\* Speed costs lives. Plus, Virginia law requires all motorists to slow down and/or move over when passing an emergency vehicle stopped on the side of a road. With more troopers on the highways during the Memorial Day weekend, motorists need to be compliant and safely share the road.

During the holiday weekend, Virginia State Police will increase visibility, checkpoints and traffic enforcement efforts as part of the 2008 Combined Accident Reduction Effort (C.A.R.E.) program. Operation C.A.R.E., as it is known, is a state-sponsored, national program designed to reduce crashes, fatalities and injuries caused by speeding, impaired driving and failure to use occupant restraints, particularly during the national holidays. The 2008 statistical counting period begins Friday, May 23, and ends at midnight on Monday, May 26.

“Complying with speed limits is critical to the safe and efficient flow of traffic on Virginia’s highways,” said Colonel W. Steven Flaherty, Virginia State Police Superintendent. “Overall safety on the road, including buckling up, driving drug and alcohol free and limiting distractions, must be exercised not just this holiday weekend but all summer long if Virginians want to save lives and reduce crashes.”

During the 2007 Operation C.A.R.E. Memorial Day enforcement period, Virginia State Police cited and/or arrested:

- 10,198 speeders
- 3,319 reckless drivers
- 1,206 safety belt violations
- 346 child restraint violations
- 235 impaired drivers



A total of 16 people died in Virginia as a result of traffic crashes over the 2007 Memorial Day weekend. Eleven lives were lost on Virginia’s highways during the holiday period in 2006.

(\*Source: Department of Motor Vehicles)

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