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Shapiro Administration Teams Up with West Virginia and Ohio to Remind Travelers to Drive Sober and Slower this Holiday Season

Operation Safe Holiday runs through January 1 with crackdown on unbuckled occupants and impaired drivers.

There were more than 1,100 crashes and 33 fatalities from drug and alcohol-related crashes last holiday travel season.

Claysville, PA – Today, **Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Secretary Mike Carroll** and **Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) Troop B Commanding Officer Captain Jeremy Barni** along with representatives from the **West Virginia Governor's Highway Safety Program** and the **Ohio State Highway Patrol (OSHP)** gathered at the Washington Welcome Center to remind drivers to use their seat belts, drive sober, and eliminate distractions behind the wheel this holiday season; as well as kick off Operation Safe Holiday, a series of informational and enforcement efforts running now through January 1, 2027.

Operation Safe Holiday kicked off on November 9 in Pennsylvania with the “Click It or Ticket” (CIOT) Thanksgiving Enforcement Mobilization, running through November 30. During the effort, PSP will offer no-cost child passenger safety seat fitting clinics at several locations statewide, with the goal of keeping Pennsylvania’s youngest travelers safe on the road.

The Holiday Season Impaired Driving Campaign begins November 25 and runs through January 1. Throughout Operation Safe Holiday, law enforcement will conduct sobriety checkpoints, roving patrols, and regular traffic safety patrols to crack down on drivers impaired by drugs or alcohol.

“Your choices behind the wheel can change lives forever,” said **PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll.** “Make safe choices. Designate a sober driver or plan to take a ride share. Put your phone down and always buckle up. In a crash, your seat belt can be the difference between life and death.”

In partnership with the **West Virginia Governor's Highway Safety Program** and the **Ohio State Highway Patrol**, law enforcement will conduct similar operations as the holidays draw near. West Virginia law enforcement will participate in a Thanksgiving impaired driving enforcement period from November 25 through November 29. Troopers in Ohio will focus on enforcement of crash-causing violations throughout the month of November, with impaired driving, distracted driving, and safety belt use at the forefront of operations. As part of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) "Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over" campaign, law enforcement in both states will deter and intercept impaired drivers during the month of December and into the New Year holiday.

"The Pennsylvania State Police will continue to work with our local, state, and regional highway safety partners to keep our roadways safe during the busy holiday travel season," said **Pennsylvania State Police Troop B Commanding Officer Captain Jeremy M. Barni.** "Troopers will conduct targeted enforcement efforts aimed at deterring impaired driving. No matter how far you travel this holiday season, put the phone down, designate a sober driver, and buckle up."

"Our traffic incident responders answer the call in all conditions on roadways across West Virginia," said **West Virginia Governor's Highway Safety Program Director Jack McNeely.** "When emergency personnel and law enforcement are working on the roadside during these holiday enforcement waves, they deserve our full attention and respect. Every driver has a responsibility to slow down, move over, drive sober, and stay alert so everyone gets home safely."

"As we approach the holiday season, troopers will be highly visible across Ohio, focused on enforcing crash-causing violations and impaired driving," said **Ohio State Highway Patrol Office of Field Operations Commander Major David R. Brown.**"We want everyone to have a safe holiday season, and that begins with responsible driving."

According to PennDOT data, during the 2025 holiday travel period beginning the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and running through January 2, 2026, there were 832 alcohol-related crashes, resulting in 18 fatalities and nearly 500 injuries. During the same time, there were 293 drug-related crashes, resulting in 15 fatalities and more than 200 injuries.

Pennsylvania's hands-free law, known as Paul Miller's Law, prohibits the use of hand-held devices while driving, even while stopped temporarily due to traffic, a red light, or other momentary delays. Drivers can still use their phones to alert authorities in the event of an emergency and use hands-free technology to make phone calls, use a GPS, and listen to music.

The holiday seat belt and impaired driving enforcement campaigns are funded through PennDOT's statewide annual distribution from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. For more information on PennDOT's highway safety efforts visit, www.pa.gov/dotsafety.

PennDOT Welcome Centers are open seven days a week, including most holidays, from 9:00 AM to 5:30 PM. Trained Tourist Information Counselors are ready to provide everything you need for your last-minute holiday magic, including information about regional attractions, and assistance with romantic reservations and accommodations for your seasonal travel. For additional Pennsylvania travel and tourism information, or to request the 2026 Pennsylvania Travel Guide, check out visitpa.com or call 1-800-VISIT-PA (847-4872).

Travelers can check conditions on major roads by visiting www.511PA.com. 511PA, which is free and available 24 hours a day, provides traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, traffic speed information and access to more than 1,200 traffic cameras. 511PA is also available through a smartphone application for iPhone and Android devices, by calling 5-1-1, or by following regional X alerts.

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Editor's Note: Photos and video from the event will be available at PACast.com.

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