

PUBLIC INFORMATION RELEASE

**Owatonna Police Department
204 East Pearl Street
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For Release Immediately

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THE OWATONNA POLICE DEPARTMENT CITED 51 MOTORISTS DURING JULY SPEED ENFORCMENT CAMPAIGN

Owatonna, Minn. — Throughout July the Owatonna Police Department conducted enhanced speed patrols and cited 51 motorists traveling at illegal speeds during a statewide *Safe & Sober* effort. The Steele County Sheriff's Office, the Blooming Prairie Police Department and the Minnesota State Patrol also participated in this Safe and Sober Speed Enforcement Campaign.

"Every time you get behind the wheel put safety first — travel at the posted speed limit and reduce your risk for a crash," says Captain Eric Rethemeier.

Speeding is the most commonly reported factor in fatal crashes. Each year in Minnesota, speed contributes to about 150 traffic deaths and 7,000 injuries. In the three-year period 2006–2008 in Minnesota, speed contributed to 3 traffic deaths in Steele and nearly 400 fatalities statewide — resulting in an economic impact of more than \$454 million.

In Steele County a typical 10 mph over the limit speeding ticket can cost \$128. Among those cited for speed, some were issued citations for travelling at speeds 10 to 15 MPH over the posted speed limit. One motorist was cited for travelling 26 MPH over the posted speed limit.

The Owatonna Police Department has a speed trailer that is placed throughout the city where there has been a reported problem with speeding. This speed trailer gathers information for the department to use in identifying potential high speed and traffic areas. The Owatonna Police Department takes traffic safety very serious and officers conduct several traffic enforcement initiatives in various locations throughout the city.

The *Safe & Sober* effort is coordinated by the Department of Public Safety Office of Traffic Safety. The campaign is a component of the state's *Toward Zero Death* initiative (TZD). TZD is a multi-agency approach to address traffic issues regionally through enforcement, education, engineering and emergency trauma care and response.

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