

O'Fallon Police Department launched the second phase of their Sustained Traffic Enforcement Program (STEP) grant program for the Christmas holidays. The intensified enforcement effort against impaired drivers and seat belt violators began on Monday, December 17 and ran through Monday, December 31, 2012 concentrated between the hours of 9 p.m. to 6 a.m..

The STEP grant, administered by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), focuses sharply on specific times of the year and also on specific times of the day when data shows alcohol-involved and unbuckled traffic crash fatalities are the highest. The increased enforcement details conducted during these times raises the perception of "getting caught" and deters potential impaired drivers and potential unbuckled occupants.

"The O'Fallon Police Department is dedicated to saving lives through the use of these enforcement periods", said Mayor Graham. "The ultimate goal of the enforcement is to obtain voluntary compliance of safety belt usage and unimpaired driving by every citizen who drives on the streets of our City."

The intensified enforcement effort against impaired drivers and seat belt law violators underscores the disproportionate number of traffic deaths involving alcohol and unbelted motorists.

According to data from IDOT and NHTSA, the midnight to 3 a.m. timeframe is the deadliest time on Illinois roadways. In addition, 9 p.m. is the time of day when data shows that alcohol involvement and low seat belt use begins to play a much more significant role in motor vehicle fatalities.

"The numbers do not lie. We will be stepping up our enforcement efforts, making sure impaired drivers are off the road and motorists are buckled up for a safe Christmas holiday," said Lieutenant Jim Cavins. "In O'Fallon, the message is simple... Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over and Click It or Ticket."

"Many lives can be saved by changing public attitudes regarding risk-taking behaviors such as speeding, impaired driving, and the non-use of safety belts and child safety seats," said Police Chief John Betten. "It has been shown that visible enforcement programs that focus on these types of violations offer the greatest potential for changing these behaviors."

The O'Fallon Police Department Traffic Safety Unit encourages all drivers to buckle up, drive sober, slow down, and drive responsibly.

City of O'Fallon looking at an HSA Plan — Becoming a Health Care Consumer

With a Health Savings Account (HSA) Plan, millions of people are already taking advantage of the opportunity to become better health care consumers by taking more control over their health and increasing their consumer purchase power over their health care dollar.

Health care consumerism 101

Being a consumer of health care services is about putting more purchasing power and decision making into your hands. An HSA Plan is designed to do just that. In fact, it has two important goals.

Goal 1: To encourage you to have more personal involvement in your health care purchasing decisions.

Goal 2: To encourage you to make healthier choices and seek quality care.

It's what we would call health care consumerism 101. If there is a chance that more money will come out of your pocket, you will want to know the price of the service you are buying. In addition, you might weigh the cost against the benefits of various treatment options. Therefore, you are inclined to shop around to be sure you are getting the best care for the money you spend. In addition, you might decide against receiving care that isn't necessary or making sure the care you do receive is of the highest quality.

With the HSA Plan, the big change you may notice is how health care services are paid. You will have what is called a high-deductible health plan (HDHP). *So long as you are HSA-eligible*, you have the option of opening your personal health savings account, or HSA, to help you save money, income-tax free, for qualified medical expenses. This can include expenses you have before you meet your deductible or expenses that may not be covered by your health plan, like dental and vision. It's your money, so you choose when and where to spend it.

This means you may want to pay closer attention to where you receive care. You see, the more you know about actual costs, the more doctors and hospitals will want to be competitive and upfront about their prices. Competition benefits everyone because it usually results in lower costs, without sacrificing quality.

Think of it this way. When you need your car serviced or repaired, you want a good mechanic or repair shop at the most affordable price. You might call around and compare – you might even ask a friend. Comparison shopping and doing a little bit of homework is all part of being a good consumer. Why should it be any different when it comes to health care for you and your family?

If you want to learn more about being a consumer of health and consumer-driven health plans, visit healthcarelane.com/cdh

— *More info to come*