SAFE TRAVEL TOPS THE CHECKLIST THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

~ DHSMV partners to send the holiday message of safety ~

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) launched its Holiday Travel Campaign to ensure motorists Arrive Alive to their destination. The holidays are a peak travel period and millions of Floridians and visitors are expected to travel on Florida roads over the next two months. DHSMV is partnering with the Florida Sheriffs Association, Florida Police Chiefs Association and the AAA – The Auto Club Group to urge responsible driving and vehicle safety.

DHSMV will be educating Floridians and visitors throughout the months of November and December on safe driving behaviors such as driving sober, buckling up, checking tires and registering their Emergency Contact Information (ECI). Additionally, focus will be placed on obeying speed limits, not driving distracted and reporting dangerous drivers.

“This holiday season, the best gift we can give one another is to ensure everyone who travels our roadways arrives to their destination safely,” said DHSMV Executive Director Terry L. Rhodes. “As increased numbers of drivers take to our roads, have patience, practice safe driving techniques and make sure everyone in the vehicle is properly buckled up. Never drive impaired.”

Seat belts save lives. In 2017, 38 percent of those who were killed in crashes in vehicles where seat belt use is required chose not to wear their seat belts. Motorists should always make sure everyone in the vehicle has the proper restraint secured at all times, including themselves.

“The Florida Highway Patrol encourages everyone to plan ahead before traveling on Florida’s roadways this holiday season,” said Colonel Gene S. Spaulding, Director of the Florida Highway Patrol. “Get plenty of rest, buckle up, and avoid distractions to ensure you Arrive Alive.”

“As the holiday season is fast approaching, we are reminded that family celebrations can turn to tragedy when a family member or friend is involved in a traffic accident,” said Florida State University Police Chief David Perry, President of the Florida Police Chiefs Association. “We encourage the millions of Floridians and visitors who will travel our roadways during November and December to remain diligent with their driving and never drive impaired.”

“Many of our citizens that we so proudly serve will be traveling to visit loved ones over the holidays. On behalf of our Florida sheriffs, I encourage everyone to wear their safety belts, travel safely, and always have a designated driver when necessary,” said Florida Sheriffs Association President, Sheriff Mark Hunter.
“Stay safe this holiday season so we all can enjoy celebrating with friends and family,” said Matt Nasworthy, Florida Public Affairs Director for AAA – The Auto Club Group. “Never put your life or the lives of others in danger by getting behind the wheel impaired.”

Keep tire safety at the top of your holiday travel checklist. Tires are a vehicle’s first line of defense on the road. Proper tire maintenance is crucial to avoiding dangerous driving situations, like hydroplaning due to unsafe tread depth. It is also important during the holidays not to overload the vehicle, which may cause tire blowouts.

DHSMV reminds motorists to always keep their eyes on the road, hands on the wheel and mind on driving this holiday season. Travelers may need to adjust accordingly as traffic congestion and weather conditions may require driving more slowly this time of the year. The public is encouraged to report aggressive or impaired drivers by dialing *FHP (*347) and check traffic conditions before departing for their trip by visiting FL511.com. For more information, safety tips and additional campaign information, visit: https://www.flhsmv.gov/holidaytravel.

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**The Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles** provides highway safety and security through excellence in service, education and enforcement. The Department is leading the way to a safer Florida through the efficient and professional execution of its core mission: the issuance of driver licenses, vehicle tags and titles and operation of the Florida Highway Patrol. To learn more about DHSMV and the services offered, visit www.flhsmv.gov, follow us on Twitter @FLHSMV or find us on Facebook.