

Hiawatha Police to take part in 4/20 enforcement

Editors note: the following was submitted by Hiawatha Police Chief John Defore

Beginning April 20th thru April 22nd, the Hiawatha Police Department will join other Law Enforcement agencies in Kansas, Iowa, Nebraska, Arkansas, Missouri and Oklahoma to stop what has been an increasing epidemic for the past several years.

In an effort to change this trend, law enforcement across the six-state area will be extra-vigilant when patrolling around city, state and federal highways. Our injury and deaths continue to increase from both alcohol and drugged impaired drivers. Regardless whether a drug is legal or illegal it's a serious crime to drive while impaired by any drug. We can no longer share our roadways with these drugged impaired drivers. Impaired driving is not a victimless crime.

All available Drug Recognition Expert and Advanced Roadside Impaired Driver Enforcement officers will be out in force in an effort to remove this danger. Officers will issue citations to any individual who refuses to obey the traffic laws, whether it is for driving while impaired, for speeding, texting, or failing to buckle up. If a suspected violator refuses to submit to a blood test, a search warrant can be obtained for that individual's blood.

Why 4/20 as a date to draw attention to drugged driving epidemic, simple it's the day where people on 4/20 at 4:20 PM light up their drugs as a celebration. JAMA (Journal of American Medicine Association) has found a 12 % increase in the relative risk of a fatal crash compared to identical time intervals on control days.

“Even one death is unacceptable. Please don't drive while impaired, slow down, put the phone away or turn it off, and always buckle up.”

Respectfully,

John A. Defore

Chief of Police

Many Signals Communications