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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Share the road: September is Pedestrian Safety Month

Ontario, Calif. – The Ontario Police Department is joining the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), law enforcement, community groups, cities, counties, and other traffic safety partners to raise awareness about pedestrian safety.

September is Pedestrian Safety Month, and California, as well as the rest of the country, is grappling with how to address the rising number of pedestrians killed and injured.

A report released earlier this year by the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) projected that more than 6,200 pedestrians were killed in the United States last year, the highest number since 1990.

“While other types of traffic deaths are going down, the number of people killed when walking over the past decade or so is startling,” Ontario Police Department Deputy Chief Mike Lorenz said.

“Pedestrian safety has reached a crisis point, which is why it is critical that we work together to reverse the trend and save the thousands of lives lost every year.”

Last year, eight pedestrians were killed and another 62 were injured in the city of Ontario.

The Ontario Police Department will use Pedestrian Safety Month as a way to educate the public about traffic rights, rules and responsibilities, as well as identify trouble spots where there are higher incidents of pedestrian versus vehicle collisions.

“Pedestrian safety is a shared responsibility.” Lorenz said. “It takes a team effort to protect pedestrians and allow people to arrive to where they need to go safely, whether they are getting there by car or walking.”



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The Ontario Police Department offers tips for pedestrians and drivers:

For Pedestrians

- Look left-right-left before crossing the street. Obey traffic signals.
- Only cross the street in marked crosswalks, preferably at stop signs or signals.
- Avoid distractions. Stay off the phone while walking.
- Make eye contact with drivers. Don't assume drivers can see you.
- Wear bright clothing during the day and use a flashlight at night.
- Do not walk while impaired by alcohol and/or drugs.

For Drivers

- Follow the speed limit.
- Never drive distracted or under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- Prepare to stop when a pedestrian enters a crosswalk. Pedestrians have the right of way at crosswalks even if they are not at a stop sign or signal.
- Avoid blocking the crosswalk when attempting to make a right-hand turn.
- Be careful backing up and leaving parking spaces.

Funding for this pedestrian safety campaign is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.



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