

County Sheriff and Local Police Departments to Increase Party Patrols for Graduation

Local police and the two county sheriff's departments in Vilas and Oneida counties will increase the frequency and numbers of cars on the roads to ensure public safety during graduation and Memorial Day weekend festivities.

“With these extra patrols, we are hoping to increase the safety of not only the young adults experiencing and celebrating graduating but also the general public,” stated Lieutenant Lloyd Gauthier of the Oneida County Sheriff's Office. “Public safety is a large part of the mission of our agency.”

High school graduation season is traditionally a time for a large number of celebrations, many involving alcohol. Families of graduating seniors are reminded that it is illegal to serve alcohol to minors whose parents are not present. Local law enforcement officers will be vigilant for signs of underage persons being served at house parties.

“With the assistance of a grant from the Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council, the Oneida County Sheriff's Office will have an additional two deputies working the Three Lakes area on May 28 and the Rhinelander area on June 6 for their graduation dates,” says Gauthier. “These deputies will be actively enforcing motor vehicle laws and responding to complaints involving underage consumption.”

Similar increases in patrols will take place in Eagle River and Minocqua on the weekend of June 5 and 6. “Our deputies will be monitoring all areas of Vilas County and working in partnership with local police on these days,” states Vilas County Sheriff Niebuhr. “We want to facilitate safe celebrations through enforcement of state and local laws.”

“Both adults and minors seem to be getting the message about the dangers of drinking and driving at any age – particularly after the recent tragic death of a local sheriff's deputy,” states Oneida County Family Living agent Erica Brewster. “However, a car crash is not the only way alcohol can have a lasting impact on youth – or adults.”

The Parents Who Host Lose the Most campaign reminds parents that it's against Wisconsin law to knowingly allow a person younger than 21 who is not your own child to consume alcohol in your home or on your property. Penalties include a maximum sentence of nine months in jail and fines up to \$10,000.