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Holliston Awarded Grant to Combat Underage Drinking

Holliston, MA – Today the Holliston Police Department announced that they will receive \$5,000 as one of 38 grants to local police departments from the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) to combat underage drinking. \$280,000 in grants, funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and awarded on a competitive basis, varied between \$5,000 and \$15,000 based on the size of the community.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 33% of 15 to 20 year-olds who were killed in crashes nationwide in 2009 had a blood alcohol content of .01 or higher. Additionally, young drivers tend to engage in other risky driving behaviors while drinking, such as speeding, distracted driving, running red lights, making illegal turns, and not wearing seatbelts. In 2009, 70% of the young drivers of passenger vehicles involved in fatal crashes who had been drinking were also unrestrained.

“There are many tools to combat underage drinking, and this grant provides much needed funds to target the problem,” said Officer Matthew Waugh. “Whether you are underage, plan to sell to a minor, or buy alcohol for a minor, we will be on the look out.”

The grant will fund a variety of law enforcement activities including: stings/compliance checks in bars, restaurants, and retail locations; “shoulder tap” programs; and party patrols. Through a combination of these techniques, we will be able to analyze and crack down on both minors who seek to circumvent the law and those people and businesses that allow them to. The Department received a similar grant two years ago and was able to triple the number of alcohol possession offenses while also citing one retailer for selling alcohol to a minor.

“Teens and parents need to be reminded that underage drinking is deadly serious,” said Waugh. “Parents need to know that hosting a party where alcohol is being served to minors is not only illegal, but extremely dangerous for their teens, for others in the community, and for the parents themselves, given the legal liabilities they face.”

Any loss or injury on our roadways is one too many. The Holliston Police Department, in partnership with EOPSS, recognizes that traffic crashes are preventable, and is committed to using this grant to reduce the number of motor vehicle-related fatalities and injuries in Holliston. The Department encourages everyone to take an active role in reducing alcohol related tragedy by calling 508-429-1212 to report any suspicious activity, all callers can remain anonymous.

