

# NEWSRELEASE

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Paul Babeu, Sheriff

## **PCSO Receives Grant funding for Speed and DUI Enforcement**

The Pinal County Sheriff's Office has been awarded a \$70,000 grant by the Arizona Governor's Office of Highway Safety to work speed and DUI enforcement. This grant funding will allow our office to continue with the same aggressive enforcement/public education efforts which have helped reduce speed, alcohol and drug impaired driving fatalities and collisions.

During 2009, Pinal County had a total of 3,755 motor vehicle collisions. Out of those collisions, there were 86 people killed and another 1,890 people injured. Over fifty percent of the fatal collisions in Pinal County involved alcohol and or drug impaired drivers. Each year, nearly 500 people are killed on Arizona's roadways as the result of alcohol and drug-impaired crashes – a staggering 17,000 deaths nationally each year.

Sheriff Babeu believes high visibility, zero tolerance enforcement as well as impaired driver education is the foundation of any successful effort to reduce drunk driving and one of the ways to ensure those traveling the roads of our state are safer.

During his first year in office, Sheriff Babeu created the Pinal County Sheriff's Office Traffic Unit. The Traffic Unit patrols our roadways, works speed and DUI enforcement on motorcycles, they are the coordinating agency for the Pinal County Regional DUI Task Force and they teach driver safety and alcohol and drug impairment awareness classes throughout the county.

During 2009 in Pinal County and across the Nation, the average of fatal collisions involving alcohol and or drug impairment was fifty percent, as a result of our stepped up enforcement, during 2011 our average was only 6%. The number of drivers arrested for alcohol impaired driving has increased by 27% from 2009 to 2011 and the number of drug impaired driving arrests increased by 875%. Yes that is correct 875%.

### **Excessive Speed Grant: \$25,000.00 for overtime.**

This funding provided to us by the Arizona Governor's Office of the Highway Safety allows us to be able to provide sustained county wide traffic enforcement and education that citizens of Pinal County need in order to further reduce collisions.

**DUI Enforcement Grant: \$45,000.00 total.  
\$40,000.00 OT and \$5,000.00 for 11 PBTs and breath tubes.**

This funding provided to us by the Arizona Governor's Office of the Highway Safety allows deputies to conduct monthly DUI enforcement deployments in cooperation with Pinal County Regional DUI Task Force and host multi-agency events throughout Pinal County. It will also allow us to purchase 11 additional Portable Breath Testing devices so deputies can use them for investigations when impaired driving or minor consumption of alcohol is suspected.

Sheriff Paul Babeu stated, *"Across the United States over 90 people die every single day in traffic related fatalities. Law enforcement is doing all we can to help reduce those numbers. Motorists are reminded to obey the traffic laws, don't speed and if you choose to drink ensure you have a designated driver planned in advance. I would also like to thank Director Alberto Gutier from the Arizona Governor's Office of Highway Safety for providing funding for equipment and overtime so we can help make the roadways in Pinal County safer for everyone."*

