



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT

117 E. Carrillo St., • Santa Barbara, CA 93101

www.sbprobation.org

(805) 882-3700 • FAX (805) 882-3767

PRESS RELEASE

November 8, 2018

Probation No. 18-08

News Media Contact:

Karyn Milligan

Public Information Officer

(805) 882-3653

kmillig@co.santa-barbara.ca.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT TO MONITOR HIGH-RISK DUI OFFENDERS

(Santa Maria, Calif) – The County of Santa Barbara has been awarded a \$132,510 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) to the Probation Department, ensuring that high-risk, felony, and repeat DUI offenders are complying with all court orders. These offenders are over-represented in traffic crashes involving alcohol and other drugs, often with tragic results. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) every year 28 people in the United States die in motor vehicle crashes that involve an alcohol impaired driver. The grant is focused on high-risk repeat DUI offenders with a goal of reducing the number of persons killed and injured in alcohol and other drug related collisions in the County.

Santa Barbara County Probation Department Chief Tanja Heitman stated, “Santa Barbara County Probation Department is committed to protecting the community and enhancing the safety of individuals, whether walking on the streets or behind the wheel of a vehicle. The partnership with the Office of Traffic Safety allows for a dedicated Probation Officer to focus their efforts on those DUI offenders who present the greatest risk to the Santa Maria Valley. Driving under the influence has been a critical factor in too many vehicle related deaths. Through education, treatment and enforcement, we believe further tragedies can be prevented. We are pleased to be able to continue our efforts working with high risk DUI offenders to prevent further incidents of drinking and driving.”

The grant provides funding for a Deputy Probation Officer assigned to closely monitor drivers on supervised probation who have a felony or multiple misdemeanor DUI convictions. The assigned officer will conduct unannounced home searches and random alcohol and drug testing, as well as special monitoring to ensure compliance with court-ordered DUI education and treatment programs.

The Probation Department supports the effort from OTS that aims to drive awareness that “DUI Doesn’t Just Mean Booze,” although alcohol remains the main cause of DUI crashes. Prescription medications and marijuana can also impair drivers and may be increasingly combined with alcohol, which can result in a DUI arrest from its own effects.

“Probation orders help ensure that these offenders are not a risk to themselves or others,” said OTS Director Rhonda Craft. “By working on compliance, the Santa Barbara County Probation Department, with assistance from the Office of Traffic Safety, will be helping keep the streets across Santa Barbara County safe for all.”

Funding for this grant is from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

###