

have received criminal sanctions avoided them and received instead administrative ones. Police practices were affected by the tools at their disposal. They like the swiftness and certainty of the administrative process and dislike the lengthy and more uncertain criminal route.

At this juncture, the bottom-line impact of this practice on alcohol-related crashes is not known and is not entirely relevant. The point is that if we do explore opportunities for moving sanctions from the criminal to the administrative sector, we need to be mindful of the implications—other benefits and disbenefits—this might have in the broadest sense.

Another trend that can impact police morale is the increasingly common practice in which police departments are eliminating their special traffic forces and homogenizing them with other specialty forces into something called community policing services. As a consequence, officers previously responsible primarily for traffic issues are becoming responsible for break and enter, domestic violence, and so on. This is a difficult trend to resist and I am uncertain how active we ought to be in trying to do so. Perhaps an alternative course of action is to accept the trend but try to ensure that traffic issues do not get lost in the shuffle. This can be done in various ways but at the local level, we need to consider mechanisms for providing support, recognition and encouragement of officers for their traffic safety efforts. Maybe they will see this as a priority, if they are rewarded for attending to it.

APPENDIX C2C

USING NEWS MEDIA TO ENCOURAGE ENFORCEMENT

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Traffic safety advocates increasingly understand the importance of a strong earned media component in their S.T.E.P. programs. Earned media can also provide the key to another important need: *providing enforcement encouragement to small and mid-size departments and their individual officers.*

Law enforcement officers can best perform their work if they receive public support from community members and from news outlets. Unfortunately, what many police departments more commonly receive from their local newspapers, TV news programs and radio commentators is criticism. This negative community-wide discussion about police work can lead to low morale and high personnel turnover and does nothing to encourage either departments or their individual officers to enforce traffic safety laws. *Bad press* can support officer attitudes of "why should I enforce this seat belt or DUI law? The community is against us anyway. Enforcing this law will just make it worse." *No press* may imply lack of community support, or even lack of community interest. *Good press* is the alternative, and it is up to traffic safety advocates and

agencies to provide it.

In several recent projects, we have found that community-based traffic safety advocates can generate supportive news media that will encourage enforcement. Frequently, these supportive news stories represent the only positive news coverage of the department in recent memory. In these cases, a little good news has often gone a very long way toward supporting enthusiastic, ongoing enforcement.

In Oceanside, California, George Gaumont's Prevention Research Center project to reduce alcohol-related trauma used earned news media as a central tactic in achieving very large reductions in alcohol-related crashes. Gaumont's project worked hard to generate monthly TV news stories, newspaper columns, letters to editors and supportive radio talk show discussion which supported the need to aggressively enforce existing DUI laws. The Oceanside Police Department designated two full-time DUI officers to patrol the city of 130,000 residents. The organized community support for enforcement, communicated to residents through the news media, helped create a positive image for the police agency, and encouraged DUI patrol officers and department leaders to continue their aggressive approach.

In the Louisiana Office of Highway Safety's year-long seat belt project, Janet Dewey, Pete Stout and I traveled the state teaching PLOs and community workers how to generate news that would support enforcement of the state's new primary belt law by local agencies. We all knew that passage of the belt law would not, by itself, insure that local departments would enforce it. But agencies and officers appreciated the supportive news coverage they received, and they regularly told us that they felt their community understood why it was important to enforce the law.

Specific media techniques, which will be listed further on in this article, can be used by traffic safety leaders to demonstrate support for the enforcement of specific laws. When properly applied, these techniques can:

- *Increase enthusiasm for enforcement*, both at the level of the department and at the level of the individual officer.
- *Increase positive of enforcement of the specific law or issue area* (such as DUI enforcement in general, zero tolerance, youth DUI license revocation, speed enforcement, seat belt enforcement, etc.)
- *Increase the quantity of enforcement*. Officers tend to focus more work in areas where they receive public support.
- *Increase positive news coverage about the department in general*.

Traffic safety advocates can use news media to support and encourage enforcement in a number of ways:

- *Release news about traffic safety enforcement from a source outside the police agency. Design the release to support enforcement activities on this issue.* Rather than having the police agency release a statement saying it will increase seat belt enforcement, have a

local safety council chapter or a child safety group release the news. The release can still quote police officials and offer enforcement details, but the main sense of the story should be something like, "A safety group supports new police policy of increased seat belt enforcement. Details of police enforcement plan also released. Data shows lives, dollars saved." The safety group may be seen as being in a more neutral position than police on this issue and can therefore provide *outside support* for enforcement.

- *Include authentic community voices as spokesperson and prepare them to make supportive remarks about the appropriateness of enforcement on this issue.* Seek educated participation by such peoples the leader of a parent-teacher group, a college or high school student, a businessperson, an EMS worker and a local government budget analyst. Including their supportive and explanatory comments in your written news release, or including them as spokespersons in a news event or news conference will provide enough variety of input that reporters will probably not feel compelled to seek additional input from an outside person whose views will be contrary but uneducated on the issue. Helping them to come forward to explain why enforcement is a useful tool in preventing traffic safety crashes, injuries, deaths and expenditures is part of a helpful community-wide discussion.
- *Release data, drawings, photos, videos, quotes by out of town experts, or other materials which will support the appropriateness of enforcement activities.* After all, research and experience consistently demonstrate that *enforcement + public information = traffic safety prevention of injuries, deaths and expenditures*. Advocates should, therefore, frequently share details with the public through news work.
- *Hold news events which portray police officers and enforcement activities on this issue in a positive light.* Advocates can set up fun, positive outdoor news events that cast traffic officers as community heroes.

On Valentine's Day in Vallejo, California, Michael Sparks and his co-workers at Vallejo Fighting Back provided roses for police officers to hand out to non-drinking drivers at Zero Tolerance DUI checkpoints run by the city police and the California Highway Patrol. In Kenner, Louisiana, officers passed out Thanksgiving hams and turkeys to drivers who had their belts buckled at a checkpoint. TV news gleefully reported the good news at both events, portraying the officers, the departments, and their communities in positive terms. Of course, the news stories also carried seat belt safety data. And authentic voices from the community spoke to news reporters on the scenes. Well-designed, ongoing, community-based media activities can provide just the right positive support to assure that enforcement activities will be forthcoming.

APPENDIX C3

ENVIRONMENTALLY BASED PREVENTION POLICIES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

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INTRODUCTION

Over the last decade, the number of deaths and injuries related to impaired driving has declined significantly in the United States as well as in other industrialized countries. For example, in 1982, 57 percent of all highway fatalities in the U.S. involved a driver or pedestrian with a measurable blood alcohol level. By 1995, this figure had decreased to 41 percent of fatalities. The total number of traffic fatalities decreased from 43,945 in 1982 to 41,465 in 1995 (a decline of 6%) while alcohol-related fatalities decreased from 25,170 to 17,130 in the same time period (a decline of 32%) (NHTSA 1995).

Similar reductions have occurred in other industrialized countries, including Great Britain, Germany, the Netherlands, Canada, and Australia (Transportation Research Board 1994). Some countries have experienced slight increases in the last few years, causing some concern. The general trend, however, has been very encouraging. The harm that has been avoided is truly monumental. For example, in the United States, if alcohol-involved crash rates had continued unchanged since 1982, almost 13,000 more people would have died in 1993. Many thousands of serious injuries were also avoided.

In recent years, the political and economic mood has been such that policies that require centralized government control or funding are less popular and acceptable. A host of strategies exist, however, that can be implemented at the local level. This paper will provide an overview of research evidence regarding the effectiveness of common environmentally based strategies that can be implemented at the community or local level.

Environmental approaches are defined as strategies that are applied widely to whole populations or groups and that are designed to change the legal or social environment in order to change when people drink, how much they drink, and how they transport themselves after they drink. These approaches are distinct from treatment or other strategies designed to affect individual problem drinkers and drivers.

The strategies can be loosely divided into seven types:

- Availability of alcohol
- Sales and service policies
- Minimum purchase age
- Information strategies
- Controls on alcohol advertising and promotion
- Impaired driving strategies
- Transportation strategies