



PRESS RELEASE

I. DATE OF PRESS RELEASE: February 27, 2009

II. TYPE OF ANNOUNCEMENT:
Livermore Police to target Negligent Operators in March 2009.

III. FACTUAL INFORMATION:
One in five fatal crashes involves at least one driver who is not properly licensed, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Suspended, revoked, and unlicensed drivers can not only make the roads more dangerous for other drivers and passengers, but they also raise insurance premiums and public-safety costs.

Livermore Police Sergeant John Hurd has seen that driving without a license and driving on a suspended license in town is fairly common. It's the people who say, "I'll take my chances" that will be the focus of the department's attention in March. Those drivers who are caught driving on a suspended or revoked license face fines or up to six months behind bars. The penalty depends on the driver's record, criminal history and how soon they repeat the offense after the license is suspended or revoked. The bigger impact to these negligent operators will be the costs associated in retrieving their vehicle.

California Vehicle Code (CVC) Sections 14602.6 and 14607.6 authorize law enforcement agencies to tow and impound vehicles for 30 days when driven by unlicensed, suspended or revoked drivers. The cost of a 30 day impound could exceed \$1,200.00. The Livermore Police Department now charges a \$282.00 fee to release a vehicle that has been towed or impounded. The tow companies charge \$100.00 to \$150.00 for the tow fee. Tack on a daily storage fee of up to \$55.00 and it becomes very expensive to retrieve a vehicle that has been impounded due to the driver's negligence.

It is also important for our community members to know who they allow to drive their vehicles. Under Section 14604 CVC, the owner of a vehicle has a duty to assure the person driving their vehicle possesses a valid license. If you allow or permit anyone, including: your wife, son or daughter, or friend or relative, to drive your vehicle, and that person does not have a valid driver's license, the vehicle will be impounded and you will be responsible for towing and storage fees. You will not have access to the vehicle for 30 days.

A 2004 study showed that drivers whose vehicles were impounded have, relative to similar drivers whose vehicles were not impounded: 23.8% fewer driving convictions and 24.7% fewer crashes.

By focusing enforcement on these negligent operators, we can reduce the number of collisions occurring in town, especially the number of hit and run collisions as we often find that drivers that flee the scene of a collision do so because their license is not valid.

We hope that with increased enforcement and community education, suspended or unlicensed drivers will choose other forms of transportation.

IV. CONTACT PERSON: Sergeant John Hurd
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Should you require further information please call the contact person designated in this press release. If the contact person is not available, and you have a deadline, please call the on duty Watch Commander at (925) 371-4820.

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