



PRESS RELEASE

I. DATE AND TIME OF PRESS RELEASE: January 6, 2010 @ 3:30 p.m.

II. ANNOUNCEMENT:

Livermore Police to target negligent operators in January 2010.

III. INFORMATION:

The Livermore Police Department will be focusing enforcement efforts on drivers who are driving with a suspended or revoked drivers' license, or who have never been licensed to drive in California.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, one in five fatal crashes involves at least one driver who is not properly licensed. Suspended, revoked, and unlicensed drivers make the roads more dangerous for other drivers and passengers and also raise insurance premiums and public-safety costs. 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 hope to reduce the number of collisions occurring in town. We also hope to reduce the number of hit and run collisions as we often find that those drivers that flee the scene of a collision do so because their license is not valid.

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, "Hey, I'll take my chances and see what happens" that will be the focus of the department's attention in January. Those drivers who are caught breaking the law by driving on a suspended or revoked license can face anything from fines to six months behind bars. The penalty depends on a driver's record, criminal history and how soon the driver was caught driving after having his license taken from him or her. The bigger impact on these negligent operators will likely be the costs associated with 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. Those vehicles that stay impounded for the entire thirty days can cost in excess of \$1200 to retrieve.

It is also important for our community members to know who they are allowing 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.

We hope that increased enforcement, and community education, will get those drivers who should not be driving to use other forms of transportation. In October 2009, LPD impounded 134 vehicles being driven by drivers who were suspended, revoked, or never licensed. LPD impounded 112 vehicles in November and 90 in December.

IV. CONTACT PERSON: Sergeant John Hurd
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Steve Sweeney
Chief of Police