



## Public Information Release

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### **Hennepin County Traffic Enforcement Group Will Target Dangerous Behaviors During May Event**

Several recent serious crashes throughout the Twin Cities Metro area have served as a call to action for the Hennepin County Traffic Enforcement Group.

The upstart group's first event is scheduled for Friday, May 6<sup>th</sup>. Officers, troopers, and deputies representing 14 agencies that work in Hennepin County will work together to make an impact on traffic safety. Officers will target bicycle, pedestrian, and distracted driving violations, in and throughout Minneapolis.

A number of serious, and even deadly, pedestrian- and bike-related crashes have occurred in the metro recently. Driver distraction is a leading crash factor in Minnesota, accounting for around 20 percent of all crashes annually, resulting in at least 70 deaths and 350 injuries. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) reports that these numbers are vastly underreported due to officers' challenges of determining "distraction" as a contributing crash factor.

Distracted driving behaviors include texting, checking emails, putting on makeup, shaving, and reading, to name a few. Many drivers are still unaware of recent law changes prohibiting these behaviors. With the weather warming up, now is the time to send the message that these behaviors won't be tolerated in our communities.

The Hennepin County Traffic Enforcement Group is an agency-funded group that targets community-specific events and traffic problems. Events are planned for multiple communities throughout Hennepin County for the upcoming summer months.

