

OPP wants drivers to 'move over' this long weekend

As the OPP gears up for a busy Civic Holiday long weekend, they are giving the public a heads-up on what dangerous driving habits they'll be watching out for, and what positive driving behaviours they will be expecting from motorists.

One important law the OPP will be looking for drivers to adhere to is Ontario's 'Move Over' law. This law applies to all motorists who are approaching a police, fire or ambulance vehicle in the same direction of travel, stopped on the roadside with its lights flashing. Drivers in this situation are required to slow down and pass with caution, but if the road has multiple lanes, drivers must move over into another lane, if it can be done safely.

According to OPP Deputy Commissioner Larry Beechey, far too many drivers ignore this law.

'Since 1989, we have lost five OPP officers who were tending to their duties on the side of the road when they were killed by approaching vehicles, and many of our emergency partners have also died at the hands of careless drivers in the same situation,' he said.

OPP is reminding motorists that because this law was introduced 10 years ago (in 2003), the grace period during which officers tend to raise awareness of a new law and let people off with a warning is no longer in effect and violating this law comes with a \$400 to \$1,200 fine and three demerit points upon conviction.

'Over the 2012 Civic Holiday long weekend, we lost five people in motor vehicle collisions within OPP jurisdiction, and this year our officers will be on alert for people who display aggressive driving habits, those who drive while impaired or distracted and those who are not wearing seat belts,' said OPP Chief Superintendent Don Bell.

OPP officers will also be highly visible on the water and trails, laying charges against people who show a disregard for public safety while boating or off-roading this weekend. According to Bell, six people have died in off-road vehicle incidents so far this year and alcohol was a factor in four of those fatalities.