CMPD will be conducting a DUI and driver’s license checkpoint

The Costa Mesa Police Department will be conducting a driving under the influence (DUI) and driver’s license checkpoint on the day after St. Patrick’s Day, Friday, March 18, 2022, from 8:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. within the city limits.

Checkpoint locations are determined based on data showing incidents of impaired driving-related crashes. The primary purpose of DUI checkpoints is not to make arrests, but to promote public safety by distributing educational information and by taking suspected impaired drivers off the road.

“If you plan to celebrate St. Patrick’s Day on Friday, have a game plan to get home safe and do not drink and drive,” Sgt. Dan Miles said. “These checkpoints, funded by the California Office of Traffic Safety, are essential to keeping the community safe. On Friday, we will be looking for impaired drivers because driving under the influence is dangerous and puts others on the road at risk.”

“Our preference is to have zero DUI drivers on our roadways and that those who decide to drink do so responsibility by always having a designated driver,” said Chief Ron Lawrence. “DUI checkpoints are a way to educate our community and our hope is people learn to plan ahead with alternative transportation when out drinking.”

CMPD reminds the public that impaired driving is not just from alcohol. Some prescription medications or over-the-counter drugs may interfere with driving. Always follow directions for use and read warning labels about driving or “operating heavy machinery,” which includes driving a car. While medicinal and recreational marijuana are legal, driving under the influence

of marijuana is illegal. Drivers charged with a first-time DUI face an average of $13,500 in fines and penalties, as well as a suspended license.

CMPD offers these reminders to ensure you have a safe night of fun that does not involve a DUI:

- Always use a designated sober driver to get home, which could be a friend who is not drinking, ride-share, a cab or public transportation.
- If you see someone who is impaired try to drive, take the keys and help them make other arrangements to find a sober way home.
- Call 911 to report drunk drivers.
- If you are hosting a party, offer nonalcoholic drinks. Monitor those who are drinking and how they are getting home.
- If you plan on drinking or taking medications that may impact your ability to drive safely, plan on staying at home.

CMPD Veteran Keith Davis promoted to captain

The Costa Mesa Police Department is proud to announce the promotion of one of its six lieutenants to the position of police captain. After a competitive promotion process, Keith Davis was selected to serve as captain and will oversee the Support Services Division.

This includes the Investigative Services Bureau, Records and Evidence Bureau, Telecommunications Bureau, and the Office of Emergency Management.

Davis, a 28-year veteran of the department, began his career at CMPD in 1991 and worked patrol until he promoted to sergeant in 2005. Davis' supervisory responsibilities through his tenure as sergeant included patrol, gang enforcement, SWAT, and Emergency Services.

In 2013, Davis promoted to lieutenant and for the first two years served as Area Commander for one of two geographic deployment areas. Meanwhile, Davis kept his SWAT assignment and would remain in that detail for 24 years, the last seven serving as SWAT Commander. He went on to serve as the Telecommunications Bureau Lieutenant until his recent promotion to captain, effective Dec. 23, 2018. Davis fills a vacancy left by former Captain Mark Manley after his departure in September 2018.

Davis has a Bachelor of Science degree from Texas A&M University, and he has accrued certifications from the California Peace Officers Standards and Training. He also graduated from the Sherman Block Supervisory Leadership Institute in 2012. Davis has been recognized as Officer of the Year and Supervisor of the Year, among other recognitions.

He is affiliated with a number of law enforcement associations, including the National Association of Tactical Officers and the Orange County Emergency Managers Organization.

"Captain Davis brings 28 years of dedicated service to this critical position," said Chief Sharpnack. "He has amassed an exceptional background through a breadth of assignments and operations. Throughout his career, Captain Davis has served us well as a successful and respected leader. It is my privilege to see Captain Davis earn this significant professional achievement."

"I'm honored and truly appreciative of this opportunity," said Captain Davis. "I thank Chief Sharpnack for recognizing my

accomplishments during my career and affording me the chance to continue serving the community and Department as a Captain. I am blessed to have worked with and learned from some of the brightest and most professional public safety personnel, and for this I am truly grateful. I would be seriously remiss if I didn't thank the most important people in my life my family, who have had to sacrifice in some ways more than I during the last 28 years. Their support and understanding has been invaluable. I am proud to serve as Captain of Support Services and I look forward to the continued success of our team."

Chief Sharpnack issues update on coyote sightings

Police Chief Rob Sharpnack reports police officers conducted an investigation into reports of a coyote den in the College Park area and found that no such den exists.

"Based on our observations, we believe an adult and two teenage coyotes have habituated the area," Chief Sharpnack said. "In response, we have conferred with Fish and Wildlife and placed traps in the neighborhood. The "Havahart" traps have been out for a few weeks and are checked multiple times per day by Animal Control. Thus far, we have yet to trap a coyote."

Chief Sharpnack notes that these actions are consistent with the city's Coyote Management Plan.

Click here for our Coyote Information page for the Coyote Management Plan, video tips and more.

It should be noted that although the department employs humane

traps, it is against the law to relocate captured coyotes. Additionally, the Police Department has and will continue to remove coyotes who have become aggressive and a threat to the community.

The police department has also placed traps in the Monticello area, near City Hall, and around Vanguard. No dens have been identified or located in any of these areas as well. In working the previously described areas, Animal Control staff have observed the presence of a variety of coyote attractants. For example, one resident had an elevated plate full of peanuts and sunflower seeds. It appeared the resident was leaving the food out for squirrels, which in turn will bring in coyotes.

The department has also seen evidence of coyotes feeding on fruit trees, easily accessible trash and food waste and pet food. In addition, the department continues to request residents with overgrown shrubs and plants cut them back so coyotes will not bed down in those concealed locations.

Chief Sharpnack urged residents to continue to report sightings on the Coyote Cacher, click here for that tool.

The Coyote Cacher enables authorities to track activity and to help determine when or if coyotes are habituated in an area. The benefit for residents is that authorities may be able to identify trends and respond to their area in a more timely manner.

Depending on the circumstances, the Coyote Cacher information may also help in deciding whether to deploy traps and/or seek out the coyotes with tranquilizer guns. In those cases, the coyotes that are captured are euthanized.

Click here for a Coyote Warning flier.

City launches new interactive maps to monitor police and fire calls for service

With the City Council hearing from citizens that the city's crime map technology was difficult to navigate online, city staff responded by unveiling two new interactive maps that will give website visitors the ability to monitor Police Department and Fire & Rescue calls for service.

Located on the city's website here and here, the maps are the culmination of a coordinated effort between the Fire and Police Departments and Information Technology staff.

"The council listened to residents and city staff then took their input and created a user experience that is friendly and informative," IT Director Steve Ely said. "The Information Technology Department team will continue to work towards bringing more online systems to the public in the future."

The maps can be viewed in multiple ways, tracking calls from the last 24 hours to the last 14 days. Viewers can click on icons to view additional data such as the city block the incident occurred, the time the event happened and the type of call.

"After several months of development, we have created a new tool for residents to monitor the crime and police-related calls in their city and neighborhoods," Police Chief Rob Sharpnack said. "Thanks to IT Director Steve Ely and his staff for their hard work and dedication in getting this done."

For the first time, residents will now also be able to monitor

Fire & Rescue calls.

“Costa Mesa has embraced a highly valued level of transparency and we felt this new interactive map will add to that approach by providing residents with a tangible perspective of the emergency incidents and calls for service their fire and rescue teams respond to on a 24/7/365 basis,” Fire Chief Dan Stefano said.

To protect members of the public and first responders, the calls on the maps typically have a 30-minute time delay following the conclusion of an emergency incident or call for service.

Costa Mesa Police in midst of national DUI enforcement campaign

Costa Mesa Police Department will participate in a high-visibility national enforcement campaign, “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” through Monday Sept. 3.

During the campaign, which started Aug. 17, Costa Mesa officers, along with the CHP and other local agencies, will increase the number of officers on the road with the mission of mitigating suspected drunk and/or drug impaired drivers.

Motorists caught driving impaired will be pulled over and arrested. CMPD is increasingly trained and poised to act on drug impaired drivers. Motorists taking prescription drugs, particularly those with a driving or operating machinery warning label, may be impaired enough to get a DUI.

Marijuana can also be impairing and result in a DUI, especially in combination with alcohol or other drugs. CMPD will continue these added DUI Saturation Patrols up through the Labor Day weekend, which tends to have some of the highest statistical occurrences of DUI related collisions and fatalities.

State approves needle exchange program despite known public safety concerns

City officials learned today that the California Department of Public Health's Office of AIDS has approved an application for a mobile needle exchange operation in Costa Mesa (and three other Orange County cities) despite overwhelming community opposition and warnings from the Costa Mesa Police Department and the City Attorney's Office about the substantial risks to public health the program presents to the Costa Mesa community.

"I am appalled that state officials would approve this needle exchange program in our community," Mayor Sandy Genis said. "The applicants for this program made no public outreach efforts in Costa Mesa and their poor application demonstrates

they don’t care about our city. Further, they have a terrible record when it comes to collecting the needles that are passed out at a rate of 20 needles or more for every one collected. We are going to quickly examine our options and will continue to oppose this irresponsible program.”

Mayor Genis noted the area the exchange is being proposed to operate is in very close proximity to housing, businesses and Whittier Elementary School.

In April of 2018, the City of Costa Mesa learned through social media that a group by the name of the Orange County Needle Exchange Program (OCNEP) had filed an application to distribute needles in Westside Costa Mesa. No member of the OCNEP had previously reached out to city officials or law enforcement staff regarding this application.

In its approval of the needle exchange program, the state granted OCNEP the right to distribute needles in Costa Mesa on 17th Street, from the intersection of Whittier Avenue and west to the edge of the city boundary at the Banning Ranch property each Wednesday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The state also granted the OCNEP the right to operate needle exchange programs in the City of Orange, Anaheim and Santa Ana.

The OCNEP had previously operated a needle exchange program at the Santa Ana Civic Center but that operation was shut down by city officials who revoked OCNEP’s permit after a massive increase in needle litter that posed a threat to public safety. Several people were pricked by discarded needles, including members of the Santa Ana Police Department. The city of Costa Mesa received written and photographic evidence of the needle litter.

In a review of the application and in discussions with local government leaders, the Costa Mesa City Attorney’s office concluded the following regarding the OCNEP’s application:

- The information in the application is incorrect or incomplete.
- There is evidence of projected harm to public safety presented by local law enforcement.
- The applicant does not meet all the requirements in the state of California's Health and Safety Code.

"As demonstrated in photographs, letters and other documentary evidence of OCNEP's operation within the Santa Ana Civic Center, it is clear that OCNEP is not able to provide for the safe recovery and disposal of used syringes and sharp waste from all of its participants within a fixed location and that evidence is in the State's possession," according to a statement the city attorney provided to the state Department of Public Health.

In addition, the Costa Mesa Police Department conducted thorough research of this needle exchange program based on the experiences in Santa Ana and concluded the threat to the public's health was far too great to allow this exchange program to operate in Costa Mesa.

"It is clear in discussions with officials from the Santa Ana Police Department and reviewing written correspondence and photographs provided by the City of Santa Ana regarding the prevalence of dangerous and potentially harmful discarded needles within the community, that this needle exchange program poses a serious risk to public safety and health by inadequately accounting for the collection of the volume of needles dispensed," according to a statement the Costa Mesa Police Department provided the state.

In light of this decision by the state, the City of Costa Mesa will be in contact with officials in Santa Ana, Anaheim and Orange and the City Council will explore all potential options to protect Costa Mesa and its residents, business owners and visitors.

Any residents wishing to express concerns about this approval can call Dr. Karen Smith, Director and State Public Health Officer, at 916-558-1784.

To see the city's initial opposition documents go to our Needle Exchange Program Facts webpage here. For further questions please contact Costa Mesa's Public Information Officer Tony Dodero at 714-754-5288 or via email at citynews@costamesaca.gov.

Costa Mesa Police issue second needle exchange protest to the state

The Costa Mesa Police Department (CMPD) submitted a supplemental memo today to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) to oppose the Orange County Needle Exchange Program (OCNEP).

On May 1, 2018, CMPD sent a response to CDPH expressing concern about OCNEP's application to operate a needle exchange in the City of Costa Mesa. As a follow-up, today, June 21, 2018, a supplemental memo of opposition was sent to CDPH, citing analysis and expressed community and CMPD concerns about OCNEP.

"We thought it was imperative to explain our chief concerns and risks to public health and safety should OCNEP operate in Costa Mesa," said Capt. Bryan Glass. "We oppose the needle

exchange program as proposed to the California Department of Public Health in the interest of protecting the community."

The CDPH is currently accepting public comments on the needle exchange program application by email, SEPApplication@cdph.ca.gov, through June 25, 2018.

Click here to read the full memo, titled "OCNEP Supplemental Information Memo," which is available at www.costamesaca.gov/police, by selecting Police Information on the homepage.

Police officials warn of public health risks associated with needle exchange program

The Costa Mesa Police Department has concluded that a proposal by the Orange County Needle Exchange Program (OCNEP) to distribute syringes in the Westside of Costa Mesa has the potential to increase discarded needles in the city and present a safety risk to residents and others.

According to the Department of Public Health website, the Orange County Needle Exchange Program has submitted an application to operate its needle exchange program daily in Costa Mesa from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in an area bounded by (N) West 18th Street, (E) Monrovia Avenue, (S) West 16th Street, (W) the outer border of Armstrong Petroleum.

The Costa Mesa Police Department submitted a response to the

California Department of Public Health opposing the program.

Click here to read the response.

Members of the public who are interested in more information or commenting on this program can visit the California Department of Public Health's application page here.

Responses can be sent to this email address SEPApplication@cdph.ca.gov.

Click here to read the full application by the Orange County Needle Exchange Program.

Costa Mesa Police Department provides response to state and opposes proposed needle exchange program

After conducting a thorough evaluation of a proposal by the Orange County Needle Exchange Program (OCNEP) to distribute syringes in the Westside of Costa Mesa, the Costa Mesa Police Department has issued a response to the California Department of Public Health in opposition to this program.

City and law enforcement officials concluded that the needle exchange program had the potential to increase discarded needles in the city and present a safety risk to residents and others.

"There is a unanimous agreement regarding the potential public safety concerns posed by the OCNEP," the memorandum stated.

“Therefore, CMPD is opposed to implementation of the OCNEP in Costa Mesa at this time.”

To read the Police Department’s full statement click here.

According to the California Department of Public Health’s website, the Orange County Needle Exchange Program has submitted an application to operate its needle exchange program daily in Costa Mesa from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in an area bounded by (N) West 18th Street, (E) Monrovia Avenue, (S) West 16th Street, (W) the outer border of Armstrong Petroleum.

Members of the public who are interested in more information or commenting on this program can visit the California Department of Public Health’s application page here.

https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DOA/Pages/OA_prev_secpapp.aspx

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Officers receive MADD awards for DUI arrests

At the annual Mothers Against Drunk Driving Awards, five Costa Mesa officers officers were recognized for their hard work in arresting drunk drivers.

Officer V. Chawla received the Top Cop honor and led the way with 72 arrests followed by Officer B. Phot with 59 arrests Officer E. Wilson with 34 arrests, Officer N. Ransdell with 29 arrests and Officer K. Bao with 28 arrests.

They five officers combined had 222 DUI arrests between them

last year.

New hires for Costa Mesa Police Department brings total officers to 125

Costa Mesa Police Department recruitment efforts are paying off as the department added six new officers, one lateral hire and five OC Sheriff Academy graduates, that brings the staffing numbers up to 125 sworn officers.

“I want to thank those from the city and police department recruiting staff who have worked so diligently to add new officers to our department as we rebuild and prepare for the future,” Chief Rob Sharpnack said. “These new hires will be so critical as we tackle important city priorities and expand our specialty assignments.”

Joining the department last week was Officer Orlando Lopez, formally of the Fullerton Police Department, where he has been employed since October of 2013. Lopez is the fifth Fullerton officer to recently come over to Costa Mesa.

In Fullerton, he was a Senior Officer and has worked in Crime Scene Investigation and recently received a letter of commendation for his work on a vehicle burglary case.

Lopez decided to pursue a career in law enforcement and in 2007 he applied for and got the job as Correctional Deputy Trainee for the Riverside County Sheriff's Department where he worked for three years.

Then in February 2011, he graduated from the 183rd Riverside County Sheriff's Basic Academy and he worked in correctional facilities before joining the Fullerton Police Department.

In addition to officer Lopez, the five new academy graduates are Jeremiah Stanley, Jacob Schulze, Arturo Montoya, Michael Luu and Richard Lippincott. The five graduates were honored and recognized at the Class No. 228 academy graduation on Tuesday Nov. 7. Lippincott was named the sergeant of that graduating class.

Police team with County Probation Officers to snare six in compliance check

The Costa Mesa Police Department collaborated with the Orange County Probation Department on Thursday Aug. 24, to conduct compliance checks on offenders subject to Post-Release Community Supervision (PRCS), per the State Prison Realignment Assembly Bill 109.

These checks were designed to locate and audit the activity of local criminal offenders residing within the City of Costa

Mesa, who are under the supervision of OC Probation.

Officers completed 11 residential home checks of offenders and contacted 35 individuals, seven of whom were classified as PRCS/Probation offenders and two of whom were on formal probation with gang terms.

The compliance checks resulted in four offenders being arrested for violations of the conditions of their probation and/or new criminal law violations, and two other individuals being cited for possession of drug paraphernalia.

Those arrested, with names withheld (in compliance with PC 11075-11081), are:

Female, 59 years old, Costa Mesa
Location of arrest: 2000 block of Newport Boulevard
Supervision status: PRCS
Charges: possession of methamphetamine for sale, possession of drugs for sale, and possession of drug paraphernalia

Female, 37 years old, Costa Mesa
Location of arrest: 800 block of Towne Street
Supervision status: PRCS probation
Charges: possession of a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia

Male, 60 years old, Costa Mesa
Location of arrest: 1900 block of Meyer Place
Supervision status: probation supervision
Charges: resisting arrest, possession of methamphetamine, and possession of drug paraphernalia

Male, 26 years old, Costa Mesa
Location of arrest: 1900 block of Meyer Place
Supervision status: none
Charges: possession of drug paraphernalia

Male, 50 years old, Costa Mesa

Location of arrest: 1900 block of Meyer Place
Supervision status: probation supervision
Charges: resisting arrest, possession of methamphetamine, and possession of drug paraphernalia

Female, 53 years old, Costa Mesa
Location of arrest: 1900 block of Meyer Place
Supervision status: none Charges: possession of drug paraphernalia