



David A. Clarke Jr.
Sheriff

Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office

NEWS RELEASE

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Sheriff Suggests Additional Preventive Measures for Wrong-way Driver Problem

WisDOT Forms Joint Milwaukee County Freeway Safety Task Force

Milwaukee, WI – Sheriff David A. Clarke Jr. recently appealed to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) to expand the existing wrong-way driver pilot program by improving signage and roadway markings on expressway ramps identified as problematic by the MCSO Patrol Division.

“We cannot have drivers entering the freeway going in the wrong direction under any circumstances. Traffic engineering improvements can help, but being drunk compounds the situation. The DOT, under a Walker administration, has been more responsive to helping us make the busiest freeway system in the state a safer place to drive than my experience with the previous administration. With the help of WisDOT, we will reduce this deadly problem,” said Sheriff Clarke.

WisDOT Secretary Mark Gottlieb promptly responded to the sheriff's suggestions, and proposed forming a Joint Milwaukee County Freeway Safety Task Force to accelerate strategies to address wrong-way drivers and assess and track other trends in freeway safety. The collaborative effort will include members from the Sheriff's Office, Wisconsin State Patrol, and WisDOT's Bureaus of Field Services, Public Safety & Communications, and Transportation Safety. The task force will have its first meeting next week.

In February, Sheriff Clarke released an analysis of the wrong-way driving problem on the freeway system. The purpose of the analysis, done by the Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Analytics Division (LEAD), was to identify strategies to reduce the frequency of wrong-way drivers, thereby saving lives and reducing property damage.

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We've now scheduled the first meeting...next Tuesday at State Traffic Operation Center (STOC) at the Amtrak station. They're calling it the Southeast Wisconsin Freeway Safety Task Force: Its purpose is "to build upon collaborative efforts of the Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office and the Wisconsin DOT to address wrong-way driver incidents and crashes on the regional freeway system." Initial members: Us; Wisconsin State Patrol; WISDOT Bureau of Field Services; WISDOT Bureau of Public Safety & Communications; WISDOT Bureau of Transportation Safety.

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