

\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\*

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## **Mobile Impaired Driving Unit Gets a Facelift Prior to “420”**

The Washington State Patrol and the Washington Traffic Safety Commission work together to keep Washington roads safe by mobilizing extra patrols this weekend

Bellevue, WA - The Washington State Patrol's (WSP) Mobile Impaired Driving Unit (MIDU) is getting a facelift. After over a decade of service, the new-look MIDU will be rolled out at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, April 19<sup>th</sup> at the WSP Bellevue office.



The MIDU is a self-contained 36-foot revamped motorhome that was turned into a mobile DUI processing center and incident command post in 2006. When requested, the MIDU travels across the state in support of law enforcement efforts during DUI emphasis patrols or to emergency incidents such as wildland fires or other natural disasters. The unit is able to serve as a fully functioning mobile police station.

In addition to a new look, the unit's technical capabilities have expanded. From a simple breath test station, the unit has now become a full DUI investigation center. Drug Recognition Experts (DRE) are now on board for evaluations as well as phlebotomists for legal blood draws. The process builds stronger cases for all DUI (alcohol/drug) prosecution.

WSP partnered with the Washington Traffic Safety Commission (WTSC) in creating the new look for the MIDU and the design highlights the [Target Zero](#) program, a goal to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries on Washington's roadways to zero by the year 2030.

The Rollout will showcase the new look along with kicking off a statewide "420" marijuana enforcement emphasis. With its roots in 70's counterculture, April 20, or "420" has become a date and phrase connected to the international celebration and consumption of cannabis.

The last time April 20 fell on Saturday, increases in collisions nationwide resembled the levels seen after a Super Bowl. In preparation for the possible increase in impaired driving over the weekend, DREs from multiple agencies across the state will be working from 3 P.M. Saturday to 3 A.M. Sunday.

"The MIDU vehicle is an important part of our mission in both prevention and investigation of driving while impaired by drugs or alcohol," said WSP Chief John Batiste. "We hope everyone makes a plan to have a sober driver, taxi, or ride-share to get home safely this Saturday. We all deserve safe roadways every day of the year."

Media wishing to photograph the interior or exterior of the unit prior to or after Saturday's event should contact Sergeant Divis at [Dave.Divis@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:Dave.Divis@wsp.wa.gov) or call 425-903-0431.

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