



For Immediate Release

Captain Deion Glover
Government and Media Relations

July 25, 2023

Trooper Chris Thorson
509-731-8964
Christopher.thorson@wsp.wa.gov
Twitter: @wsp3pio

Water Follies 2023 – Pedestrian Safety Near Columbia Park

UPDATE: The main entrance to Columbia Park located westbound on State Route 240 in Kennewick, will now be OPEN for the weekend, per the Washington State Department of Transportation. The SR 240 westbound offramp to Edison Street will remain closed.

Benton/Franklin Counties - Washington State Patrol (WSP) troopers will be conducting traffic safety emphasis patrols throughout Water Follies weekend from July 28 to July 30. The emphasis patrols will focus on speeding, DUI, aggressive driving, distracted driving, and seat belt compliance.

We want this Water Follies weekend to be a safe and enjoyable event for everyone in the Tri-Cities. Our primary goal is to reduce serious injury and fatality collisions that have been happening way too often across the state. We are asking people not to drive impaired; this includes drugs and alcohol. If needed, make arrangements for a designated driver. Always wear your seat belt and drive at safe and legal speeds.

Troopers from Kennewick, Walla Walla, Grandview, and Yakima will be working in the Tri-Cities during Water Follies weekend. Additional troopers are necessary due to the influx of thousands of spectators during the weekend and the congestion issues that generally surround the area of Columbia Park.

The WSP will utilize aircraft and unmarked patrol cars to conduct emphasis patrols on Interstate 82, State Route 240, and State Route 395 throughout the weekend. Additional patrols will be conducted throughout the busy weekend to prevent collisions and promote a safe driving environment for all.

Pedestrian safety is also a concern and priority for everyone attending the event. The offramp from westbound SR 240 to Edison Street is closed from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday of the event. This closure is to ensure the safe and expeditious exit of vehicles from the Water Follies event during peak traffic times and to ensure the safety of pedestrians in the area.

Vehicles will not be allowed to stop on the shoulders of SR 240 for the purpose of dropping off or pickup up spectators, viewing the races, or air shows. Ben-Franklin Transit will have shuttle buses every hour available to transport spectators to and from the event on Saturday and Sunday for a donation. For information regarding transit services and the shuttle times, the public is asked to contact Ben-Franklin Transit or refer to <https://www.bft.org/news/events/>.

###