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DA Receives Fourth Grant to Continue Prosecuting Serious & Deadly DUI Cases

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced today that the DA's Office received a grant for the fourth year in a row from the Office of Traffic Safety to prosecute DUI cases involving fatalities and some serious injury cases. The grant is for \$ \$248,788.

As part of the grant and with assistance from the Southern California Training Center, the unit will continue to coordinate and participate in DUI prevention and awareness in schools, military bases and colleges. It will also continue to provide training to local law enforcement agencies.

"There have already been 20 defendants charged with DUI murder or manslaughter this year alone," District Attorney Summer Stephan said. "Every year we see lives shattered by death and injury, all for something that is 100 percent preventable. This grant will help our office continue its hard work in prosecuting these cases, and collaborating with our law enforcement and community to prevent this harm before it happens. This year is the worst year we have had in nearly a decade for DUI fatalities."

Last year, more than 10,322 DUI-related cases were prosecuted in San Diego County. Of that number, the District Attorney's Office prosecuted 448 DUI with injury cases, up from 363 in 2014 and 419 in 2015. Throughout the county, the trend continues with more than 55 percent of all DUI alcohol cases involving a blood alcohol content over .15 percent.

Funding from this DUI Prosecution Grant will aid the District Attorney's Office in handling cases through each step of the criminal process. This includes prosecuting both alcohol and drug-impaired driving cases. In fatal and major injury DUI vehicle collisions, members of the team may respond to the crash scene to be part of the investigation.

The DUI Homicide Unit streamlines complex DUI cases by creating expertise within the office. This results in a quicker resolution to cases and speedier justice to the families who have lost a loved one. The specialized unit creates uniformity in sentencing among the four adult courthouses. In addition, the unit helps law enforcement adapt to changes in technology by having a designated DA Investigator who is trained in the latest techniques in collision reconstruction.

A dedicated DA Investigator assists law enforcement in finding DUI suspects through investigative techniques. Many times defendants leave the scene of a crash because they are impaired. By having a dedicated team working with law enforcement, authorities are better able to find offenders and ultimately get the message out that if you leave the scene of a crash, you will be caught and prosecuted.

“Special DUI prosecution teams, particularly those working the most serious cases, get the positive results needed,” said OTS Director Rhonda Craft. “The San Diego County District Attorney’s Office, with assistance from the Office of Traffic Safety, will be working to help keep the streets across the county safe for everyone.”

Grant funding from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration will change how our office handles these challenging cases to be better, more efficient and more effective.

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Note: Misdemeanor DUI cases in the City of San Diego are prosecuted by the City Attorney’s Office. Misdemeanor DUI cases outside the City of San Diego are generally prosecuted by the District Attorney’s Office. The DA’s Office prosecutes all felony DUI cases in the County.