

OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF
FAIRFIELD COUNTY

Dave Phalen, Sheriff

PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Safe Communities Program to Return to Fairfield County –
Traffic Safety Program to focus on Reducing Fatalities through Education**

[Lancaster, Ohio, October 18, 2012] A program that left Fairfield County is returning through the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office. The Safe Communities of Fairfield County Program returned to operations October 1, 2012 courtesy of a grant from the Ohio Department of Public Safety/Office of Criminal Justice Services' Traffic Safety Division. The funding, originating from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, was obtained through the grant process and awarded to the Sheriff's Office through September 30, 2013. A Safe Communities Program targets specific educational areas that are known to cause traffic crashes and fatalities. The overall goal of the program is to educate the public of these specific dangers, and work to reduce traffic related deaths.

“We are pleased with this grant award, and the opportunity to return this important program to Fairfield County,” Sheriff Dave Phalen announced today. “Whenever you can prevent a crash from occurring, especially the potential for the loss of life, it improves the overall safety of our community. Improving safety, in whatever capacity, adds to the overall quality of life for Fairfield County citizens.”

The Sheriff's Office also announced the new Director for the Program. Teresa C. Carper, the current Safe Communities Director for Pickaway County, will join the Sheriff's Office in their goal of reducing traffic fatalities. Carper, who has been contracted for the fiscal year, will focus on seat belt safety, impaired driving awareness, motorcycle safety, and develop a teen safe driving program.

“I have had the privilege to work as a traffic safety advocate for nearly four years. Having the opportunity to work with the Fairfield County Sheriff's Office is an honor, and I look forward to meeting with local officials, law enforcement, and schools to create partnerships and programs to help reduce fatalities on local roadways,” Carper stated.

The grant award for the program is \$50,000 for the fiscal year. Funding provides for staffing, promotional materials, education, and specific programming.

Traffic crashes take the lives of thousands of people each year nationwide. By working in local communities through programs such as the Safe Communities Program, the overall goal of saving lives is approached through education and public awareness. To obtain information on what a Safe Communities Program is, or for more information on traffic safety issues, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website at www.nhtsa.gov.

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