



## **Pasco Sheriff's Office**

Public Information Office  
8700 Citizen Drive  
New Port Richey, Florida 34654  
Phone (727) 844-7732  
Fax: (727) 844-7738



### **For More Information, Contact:**

Kevin Doll  
Public Information Director  
kdoll@pascosheriff.org

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## **New DUI enforcement car presented to Pasco Sheriff's Office**

**NEW PORT RICHEY** -- Pasco Sheriff's Office deputies earned third place in the Florida Department of Transportation's 2007 Florida Law Enforcement Challenge. The Challenge is a competition between similar size and types of law enforcement agencies that recognizes and rewards the best overall traffic safety programs in Florida. The Pasco Sheriff's Office competed in the category of agencies with 251 or more certified deputies.

As part of the competition, agency members are given a chance to win a DUI enforcement vehicle, and this year the Pasco Sheriff's Office brought home that vehicle, which is now patrolling Pasco roads for impaired drivers.

"The safety of our community is our top priority," said Sheriff Bob White. "This award recognizes the hard work and dedication of our deputies. The winning of this vehicle is an added plus that we will put to good use."

The Pasco Sheriff's Office was recognized earlier this year with a national second place award from the International Association of Chiefs of Police in the "2007 National Chiefs Challenge."

Research shows that an increase in traffic enforcement results in a decrease in motor vehicle crashes, injuries, and fatalities. In fact, no other single program or strategy works as well as law enforcement in making travel on Florida's roads safer. That's why every year the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) holds the Challenge, a competition to recognize and reward the best overall traffic safety programs in Florida.

"A little friendly competition is a great way for agencies to increase their attention to traffic safety," said Randall Smith, FDOT Traffic Safety Administrator. "The Challenge provides public recognition for exemplary programs and incentives for continuing traffic safety activities, like the chance to earn points to purchase new equipment."

## **Challenge**

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The Challenge highlights areas of concentration including efforts to enforce laws and educate the public about occupant protection, impaired driving, speeding, and other areas of traffic safety. Departments submit an application documenting their activities and effectiveness in these areas. The winning safety programs are those that combine officer training, public information and enforcement to reduce crashes and injuries within their respective jurisdictions.

The top three winners in each department size category are awarded points, which translate into dollars:

First place: 12,000 points

Second place: 8,000 points

Third place: 4,000 points

Each point equals \$1, or one “Champion Buck,” toward the purchase of a variety of safety and enforcement equipment. Special category awards, such as occupant protection and underage alcohol prevention, also include Champion Bucks for winning agencies.

The Pasco Sheriff’s Office has decided to spend its winnings on extra traffic enforcement equipment, including speed enforcement lasers and kits to identify fraudulent drivers licenses.

Financed through grants from the Florida Department of Transportation and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the Challenge program complements all the other training and public information programs that the two organizations implement to promote traffic safety.