

Police add extra patrols for early fall quarter

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During the first six weekends of fall quarter, the Davis Police Department and UC Davis Police are increasing their presence in downtown Davis in an attempt to minimize the drinking-related complaints that are especially prevalent at the start of the fall quarter.

Between 10 p.m. and 3 a.m. every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night until Nov. 6, two additional officers from both the DPD and the UCDPD will be on bar patrol duty, with an emphasis on the downtown area.

"We just want make sure that everybody is safe and put out the message of zero tolerance for alcohol related violations," said Lieutenant Colleen Turay.

The most common tickets issued during this period are for fighting, public intoxication, open alcohol container violations and DUIs, Turay said.

The program, which is sponsored in part by the Safe Party Initiative, is in its fourth year and has shown success in diminishing incidents downtown during the heavy traffic of fall quarter, said DPD night patrol Sergeant Doug Bates.

"What we've noticed is a reduction in problems, not an increase in arrests," Bates said. "Our experience has been that when we step it up and make our presence known, trouble goes away."

Though the increased presence is primarily intended to address issues in the downtown area, the additional officers will be servicing calls to the entire community.

"This increase usually lasts six to eight weeks," Bates said. "If we feel like we need to extend it we will, based on activity level and problems."

Surveys conducted by the Health Education and Promotion Program - which is also responsible for the safety initiative - have shown that out of random samples of 1,000 students, the majority of reported drinking-related issues were at house parties, said Michelle Johnston, health promotions supervisor at Cowell Student Health Center.

"[The first six weeks are] sort of an education period," Bates said. "People that patronize the downtown area get to see and know us, we do education with bar owners' staff and that leads to increased teamwork and partnership with the business."

"We are able to develop a lasting relationship with the local businesses that is more meaningful than our presence in the long run," he said.

The Safe Party Initiative is a collaborative effort between the city of Davis and the UCD campus and receives monetary support from the Prevention Research Center in Berkeley, which has recently received a \$6.9 million grant to be distributed among 14 UC and Cal State campuses to promote awareness of the potential hazards of reckless alcohol consumption.

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