

# Long weekend sees rise in road fatalities and charges laid: OPP

Written By **AUGUST BETTINELI** Special to the Free Press

The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) report 6,026 charges during the Thanksgiving long weekend, with the Central Region, which covers Dufferin County, accounting for 1,581.

A four-day initiative known as 'Operation Impact', supported by Canada's Road Safety Strategy, focused on the main causes of road-related fatalities, which are aggressive driving, driving under the influence (drugs and/or alcohol), inattentive or distracted driving, and not wearing a seatbelt.

Despite the number of charges, five road fatalities took place over the Thanksgiving weekend. This brought the overall number of fatalities on OPP patrolled roads up to 218.

This year, 34 lives were lost: 10 involved speeding, six were drug/alcohol related, another six involved not using a seatbelt, two were due to inattentive driving, and five motorcyclists lost their lives.

Statistics show a 70 per cent increase in speed related fatal collisions compared to this time last year.

Overall, the charges over the Thanksgiving long weekend were distributed as follows:

4595 speeding charges, 109 racing/stunt driving, 269 because of improper seat belt use, 102 drivers were impaired, and finally 94 were distracted.

In just the Central Region, there were 1,220 speeding charges, 94 seatbelt related, 199 moving violations, 33 stunt/racing, 26 impaired over eighty, nine distracted driving charges and eight warn range suspensions.

Officers encourage drivers to slow down and drive with caution, be courteous and aware of other road users, drive defensively, wear your seat belt and never drive impaired.

To report reckless or impaired drivers, call 1-888-310-1122 or 9-1-1 in emergencies.