

The University of
Texas at San
Antonio

POLICE
DEPARTMENT

' Runner Beat

Protecting Your Future... Today

A Campus Safety Newsletter from the University Police Department



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Inside this issue:

Annual Police Department Recognition Breakfast Held	2
Travel Advisory Issued by State Department on Mexico	2
Safety Highlights	3
Detective Time	3
Watch for Drowsy Driving This Spring Break	4
Chief's Corner	4



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Safety Tips to Have a Pleasant Spring Break

Looking forward to a getting away from classes and spending a week hanging out with friends on a beautiful beach? Spring Break is a part of the college experience, and it can be one of the highlights of your college career -- if you're careful. The tips you are about to read are important whether you're traveling in or out of the country, so stay alert and play it safe, no matter where you choose to soak up your rays and release your stress.

Property Safety

- Take as few valuables with you on your trip as possible.
- Always lock your hotel room door.
- Watch out for scam artists who try to rip off students.
- If your cell phone or credit cards are stolen, report this immediately to the companies so they can cancel your service.

Physical Safety

- Always stay in the proximity of at least one friend, and preferably two or three. Adhere strictly to this "buddy system" and do not leave

with someone other than your buddies.

- Do not leave with strangers, even if it seems like a good idea at the time. Always err on the side of caution and trust your instincts.
- Watch your drink very carefully! Be aware of "date rape" drugs that people may try to sneak into your drink. Never accept a drink from a stranger or let someone else hold your drink.
- Never go to an isolated place with a stranger or someone you do not fully trust.
- Carry a cell phone with you in case of an emergency.
- Carry your identification and important medical information on your person in case of an emergency.

Alcohol Safety

If you're going to drink during Spring Break, it's very important that you take precautions. Drunk college students are seen as a target, so do not underestimate the way to take these reasonable precautions.

- Binge drinking gets students into trouble the most. The safest ap-



UTSA-PD wants you to be safe during spring break. (Clip Art)

proach is to not binge drink and to know your limit with alcohol.

- Make sure you know the signs and symptoms of alcohol poisoning.
- Do not drink and drive, EVER.
- Remember, you must be 21 years old to drink alcohol.

Additional Precautions

- Use common sense when it comes to sun exposure. Always use sunscreen with at least an SPF of 15 or higher.
- Use common sense when it comes to swimming and water safety. Never swim alone and avoid swimming when no lifeguard is present.
- Drink lots of water! Don't rely on alcoholic or carbonated beverages to quench your thirst.

Reference: www.cignabehavioral.com & www.suite101.com

TABC Warns of Alcoholic Energy Drinks

In a press release from the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC), the state said many malt drinks on the market don't look like traditional beer or malt liquor products. They say the cans and bottles are similar to non-alcoholic containers and people may not notice the difference.

Energy drinks with alcohol are dangerous and are hard to distinguish from their nonalcoholic counterparts. The drinks, with their sleek graphics, cost less than energy drinks without alcohol and are marketed to appeal to young college students.

The TABC is kicking off a spring break campaign focusing on the labels and preventing the products

from being accidentally sold to minors.

College students that mix alcohol with caffeinated energy drinks are at higher risk for alcohol-related injuries than students who drink regular cocktails, according to new research.

The researchers found students who drank the energy cocktails were twice as likely to be hurt or injured and twice as likely to require medical attention. The study also found students who drank alcohol mixed with energy drinks were more than twice as likely to take advantage of someone else sexually and almost twice as likely to be taken advantage of.

Each spring break TABC agents will be looking for underage drinkers on the beaches from Galveston to South Padre Island. Agents along the coast will be conducting random inspections, minor stings and other enforcement operations in an attempt to curb the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors.

References: myfoxhouston.com, venturacountystar.com & foxnews.com



Energy drinks with alcohol are hard to distinguish from their nonalcoholic counterparts (photo TABC)

**SECURE IT.
KEEP IT.**



UTSA Police Department

Great work by Officer Martinelli who during patrol discovered a vehicle with stolen license plates which led to the closing of an SAPD theft case. Great police work!



Be aware of travel advisories to Mexico
Photo from travelwizard.com

Annual Police Department Recognition Breakfast Held

The UTSA-PD second annual Recognition Breakfast was held on February 26, 2009 at the University Center Denman Room. Several awards were given out during the event including Officer & Civilian of the Semester, Officer & Civilian of the Year and the Golden Whistle Award.

Opening remarks were made by Chief David Hernandez who commented on how proud he is of all that the police department has accomplished. Afterwards, Chief Hernandez made the award presentations commenting on the valuable contribution that each award winner made towards the success of UTSA-PD.

Sgt. Thomas Calucci was selected as the 2008 Officer of the Year. As an example of one of the many reasons he was selected for this award is his leadership of his team of detectives who

have enjoyed some of the highest case clearance numbers (crimes solved) ever achieved with UTSA-PD and for his willingness to help employees within the police department as well as outside.

Administrative Associate Robin Diamond was selected as Employee of the Year for 2008. Ms. Diamond goes above and beyond at the Police Department. Her selection was based on a number of submissions by her peers who commented on what a great job she does for the police department.

Dr. Elizabeth Stanczak from the Student Counseling Center and Ms. Anne Jimenez from the Office of Student Judicial Affairs were each given the Golden Whistle award. This award is given to members of the UTSA community for their support of the UTSA-PD. Both Dr. Stanczak and Ms.

Jimenez have contributed to the success of the UTSA Police Department over the past year and the Golden Whistle Award is a way to show the UTSA-PD's appreciation for their efforts.

The Officer of the Semester award for fall 2008 went to Officer Robert Major for his outstanding proactive police work during the past semester. Officer Major's has a very high level of self-initiated activity as well as being able to handle difficult and delicate situations.

The Civilian of the Semester for fall 2008 went to Guard Matthew Pacheco for his hard work on third shift. He always took it upon himself to do the jobs that needed to be done and by his constant presence while patrolling the JPL library.

Employee Kudos: Congratulations to Guard Villarreal and Officers Erwin and Martinelli on a job well done in the recent apprehension of a suspect at the DTC who attempted to steal a laptop, attempted to burglarize another area and caused criminal mischief to university property. Excellent team work! **Way to go!**

Travel Advisory Issued by State Department on Mexico

In years past, taking a "side-trip" to Mexico during spring break at the Texas coast was a tradition for many college students. However, there has recently been a tremendous increase in violence south of the border.

On February 20, 2009 the US State Department issued a travel advisory for US citizens who travel to Mexico warning about the increased violence, that travelers understand the risks of visiting Mexico, how best to avoid dangerous situations and whom to contact if one becomes a crime victim.

Mexican drug cartels are engaged in increasing violence for control of narcotics trafficking

routes along the border. In order to combat violence, the government of Mexico has deployed troops in various parts of the country. U.S. citizens should cooperate fully with official checkpoints when traveling on Mexican highways.

Other points to be aware of include:

- While traveling in Mexico, American citizens are subject to Mexican law.
- Mexican law can impose harsh penalties for violations that would be considered minor in the United States.
- Excessive alcohol consumption and unruly behavior can lead to serious problems with Mexican authorities.

- Use only the licensed and regulated "sitio" or taxis.

- It is best not to carry even a pocketknife into Mexico as this can result in a weapons charge.

- For any emergencies involving U.S. citizens in Mexico, please contact the closest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Travelers going to Mexico over spring break should refer to the State Department's "Country Specific Information for Mexico", the publication "Tips for Student Travelers", and the publication "Help for American Victims of Crime Overseas". All these resources are available at the US State Department's website at <http://travel.state.gov/>.

References: travel.state.gov/ & azcentral.com



Watch for sudden flooding while driving.

“Safety Highlights” by Donovan Agans (Director BCEM)

Avoid Being Swept Away

As the old saying goes...“April Showers brings May Flowers”. In preparation, Texas will be conducting a Flood Safety Awareness Week campaign from March 16-20. Though hard to believe, San Antonio has had its fair share of flooding. Here are a few simple tips to protect yourself and loved ones in the event of localized flooding.

If a flood is likely, listen to the radio or television for information. Be aware that flash flooding can occur. If there is any possibility of a flash flood, move immediately to higher ground. Do not

wait for instructions to move.

If you must prepare to evacuate, secure your home. If you have time, bring in outdoor furniture. Move essential items to an upper floor. Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves if instructed to do so. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

If you have to leave your home, do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you. Do

not drive into flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be quickly swept away.

If you must drive in flood conditions, do NOT go around blockades set in the roadways. Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars causing loss of control and possible stalling. A foot of water will float many vehicles. Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUV's) and pickups.



The UTSA Police Department wishes all faculty, staff and students a very happy and safe spring break!



“Detective Time” by Sgt. Thomas Calucci (Supervisor, Criminal Investigations)

For this month's edition of the Runner Beat, I'd like to take things from a different perspective. The past few articles I've written pertain to what we do here at the UTSA PD Criminal Investigations Section. This month is going to be a little different. I'm going to write something from the perspective of the bad guy who is either here on campus, or comes from off campus to steal from you.

Hello UTSA community. I have a problem. I don't have a job and I need to find money somewhere. I need to steal to make money because I have an addiction. I am addicted to drugs, whether it be heroin, crack cocaine or mari-

juana. This stuff is not cheap so I need to find an easy place to steal expensive things. I can't pawn anything anymore since I got busted the last time. I think I'll go hit a university campus. Why not UTSA... they're pretty big and I'm sure I can get away with it there. I know those people won't mind if I take a few laptops or some of their textbooks.

It turns out that it's pretty easy to steal here. For some reason, the students here leave stuff all around for me to grab. I found one laptop yesterday that had just been lying there for about 30 minutes. I know that I can take it over to the flea market and get a

couple hundred bucks for it. This money might last me for a day or two, but I'll need to come back later to find some more stuff. Thanks UTSA for making it easy.

If you think this is a farfetched story, you are absolutely wrong. Almost every day we deal with crooks who have come and helped themselves to your things. We at the UTSA PD try and give you every tool to keep your items safe. If you don't know about these programs, either check our website, or contact one of our Crime Prevention Officers. I wish that every person on this campus could hear a confession from someone we bring in. It would truly amaze you.

RAINN's Top 10 Spring Break Tips Include:

1. Get to know your surroundings before you go out and learn a well-lit route back to your hotel or rental property.
2. Always carry emergency cash and keep phone numbers for local cab companies handy.
3. Form a buddy system with close friends and agree on a secret "butt in" signal for uncomfortable situations.
4. Trust your instincts. If you feel unsafe, go with your gut.
5. Avoid being alone or isolated with someone you don't know and trust.
6. Don't accept drinks from people you don't know or trust.
7. Never leave your drink unattended, and if you do lose sight of it, get a new one.
8. Always watch your drink being prepared.
9. Try to buy drinks in bottles, which are harder to tamper with than cups or glasses.
10. Avoid putting music headphones in both ears so that you can be more aware of your surroundings, especially if you are walking alone.



Drowsy driving is dangerous (Photo from edmunds.com)

Chief Hernandez says:

Congratulations to Corporal Stacey and Officer Rigney who proactively apprehended a bike theft suspect. Way to go!



UTSA Police Chief David Hernandez

Watch for Drowsy Driving This Spring Break

Sleepiness and driving is a dangerous combination. Most people are aware of the dangers of drinking and driving but don't realize that drowsy driving can be just as fatal. Like alcohol, sleepiness slows reaction time, decreases awareness, impairs judgment and increases your risk of crashing. Falling asleep at the wheel is known as the "silent killer" because it is under reported as the cause of fatal traffic crashes. There is no accurate test to determine the level of sleepiness like there is to determine intoxication.

In Texas, a reported 256 drivers were involved in fatal wrecks in which fatigue or falling asleep at the wheel was the cause of the crash. Another 4,558 drivers were involved in injury wrecks and a total of 7,711 drivers were involved in property damage

wrecks in which they were fatigued or asleep. Males and young adults ages 18 to 29 are at the highest risk for drowsy driving.

A typical crash related to sleepiness has one or more of the following characteristics:

- Crash is likely to be serious
- A single vehicle leaves the road
- The crash occurs on a high speed road like a highway
- The driver does not attempt to avoid a crash
- The driver is alone in the vehicle

To avoid a drowsy driving accident, follow these tips:

- Get adequate sleep; about 7-9 hours a night
- Schedule proper breaks; about every 2 hours
- Avoid alcohol and sedating medications

- Stop driving; find a safe place to sleep for the night

Caffeine -- does it help?

Caffeine promotes short-term alertness. It takes about 30 minutes for caffeine to begin working so the best thing to do is pull over for a coffee or other caffeinated beverage, take a break and then get back on the road. The equivalent of 2 cups of coffee can increase alertness for several hours. Keep in mind that caffeine won't have much of an effect on people who consume it regularly.

Simply put, a tired driver is a dangerous driver. Just like driving drunk or drugged, drowsy driving causes you to make mistakes behind the wheel — mistakes that can injure or kill the driver, passengers or total strangers.

References: DPS Website, edmunds.com, drowsydriving.org

Chief's Corner By Chief David Hernandez

Our New Mindset of Preventing Crime-Part II

Last month, I spoke about Dr. Steven Covey's article, A Whole New Mind-set on Fighting Crime, which discussed the shift in policing from reactive to proactive, preventing crime before it occurs. The shift in focus does not guarantee that crimes will not occur but focuses on decreasing crime whenever possible. That approach involves more than just the police department as crime is the responsibility of the entire community. Law enforcement agencies were established to assist the members of a community in getting others to comply with the rules that have been established for living within that community. Those living within a community must first do their best to abide by the rules and then to encourage others to do the same to prevent crime.

Crime prevention is about part-

nerships with community members and groups to establish ways to increase safety and deter criminal activity. Those partnerships must incorporate student, faculty, and staff if they are to be effective. The UTSA Police Department does this through various collaborations which include Judicial Affairs, Student Government, Vice Presidents, Faculty, and other student groups. The key is to develop creative ways to prevent crime that are based both on educational initiatives and preventive strategies. The educational initiatives consist of everything from Crime Prevention classes to campaigns such as "Secure It and Keep It" which incorporate student input and ideas for reducing crime. Education focuses on getting others to not only take steps to protect themselves and their belongings but to also understand the importance of choosing to do the right thing for

the right reasons.

Preventive strategies must focus on identifying where crime is likely to occur based on past history and implementing tactics to limit the opportunity for that crime to re-occur. Those tactics involve everything from adding permanent to temporary cameras, covert details, bait vehicles, knock and talks, and many other efforts. They include working closely with campus partnerships like the University Police Interaction Committee, Behavioral Intervention Team, and others to develop creative and innovative prevention strategies. The success of these partnerships is dependent on the leadership each partner provides; leadership that is focused on inspiring trust, clarifying purpose, aligning systems, and unleashing talent. Together we will achieve greater success, making UTSA a better and safer place.