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## **Memorial Day Weekends Particularly Deadly for Motorists During Last Two Years, Reports UA CARE Statistics**

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. – In the past few years, the Memorial Day weekend has seen an increase in traffic fatalities, according to statistics from the University of Alabama CARE Research & Development Laboratory.

The University of Alabama CARE Research & Development Laboratory researches crash statistics for the state and found some interesting results related to Memorial Day travel for the last few years.

During the 78-hour period of Memorial Day weekend, the number of fatal crashes is higher than a typical weekend including the following Monday. In 2004, 18 fatalities were reported, and 13 fatalities were reported for the 2005 Memorial Day weekend.

“Memorial Day weekend is typically viewed as the beginning of summer traffic. There is definitely an increase in fatal traffic accidents due to more people traveling and summer celebrations,” explained Dr. Allen Parrish, professor of computer science and director of UA’s CARE Research & Development Laboratory.

“It is much safer to drive on the Interstates than on rural roads. Even though the large, multi-car accidents that back up traffic make it on the evening news, most of the deadliest crashes occur on rural roads,” continued Parrish.

According to Parrish, combinations of alcohol and speed crashes are the cause of most of the fatal crashes in Alabama during the holiday weekends. He stated that if you conform to the following list of behaviors, it will almost eliminate the probability of being involved in a fatal crash:

- Never drink and drive, or ride with anyone who has even had a single drink.
- Avoid late-night hours when others who have been drinking are more apt to be driving.
- Observe the speed limit, move along with the traffic and keep a safe distance from other vehicles on the roadway.
- Always wear your restraints regardless of how long the trip, and keep the kids properly restrained in the back seat.

UA’s [CARE Research & Development Laboratory](#) uses leading edge technologies to offer products and specialized software development services in a variety of areas, particularly traffic safety and law enforcement. The CRDL has designed electronic citation system for use by law enforcement officers in the state of Alabama. The system is currently utilized by troopers enforcing commercial truck regulations and will be deployed to the remaining state troopers in the near future. Additionally, the CRDL routinely provides a variety of safety studies and planning documents, such as the Crash Facts Books and Highway Safety Plans.

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