

# No plans to boost checkstops: police

## New drinking and driving law starts this summer

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Calgary police say they have no plans to ramp up checkstop duties once enforcement of the province's new drunk driving legislation starts this summer — not even for the Stampede.

"Checkstop will still be out during the Stampede, but we're not expecting a super blitz at that time period," said Sgt. Rick Butler with the traffic section.

"We have officers full time on duty at both the Stampede grounds and out on the streets. We're not really expecting anything to really get out



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Calgary police are not expecting to conduct a blitz of checkstop duties even during the Stampede.

of hand just because this new law is in effect."

Butler said the changes to the province's Traffic Safety Act will have "minimal" effect on city offi-

cers because sanctions come into place after the offence has occurred. There are no plans to boost personnel when the legislation takes effect, he said.

Wayne Kauffeldt, past national chairman for Mothers Against Drunk Driving, said it's understandable that city officers won't be ramping up checkstop duties since they already do checkstops year-round.

"You can understand why they wouldn't increase manpower. We're already doing more than anyone else," he said, adding other jurisdictions do big blitz operations around Christmas and other holidays.

"They're not nearly as organized and as consistent as the Calgary Police Service and we're quite proud of that."

But Wildrose justice critic Shayne Saskiw said the province needs to provide additional resources to be able to effectively enforce the new law.

"Laws are only as good as the ability to enforce them. That's why we need more boots on the ground. So we definitely need more Checkstops

if we're actually going to make our streets safer. Penalties without actual enforcement do nothing to make us safer," he said.

One change city police are anticipating is an increase in vehicles being seized, given the new administrative penalties for those caught with a blood-alcohol content between .05 and .08.

Currently, those drivers have their licence suspended for 24 hours and face a possible vehicle seizure, though it's not mandatory.

Come July 1, those drivers will face a 24-hour suspension and a mandatory 24-hour vehicle seizure.

Effective Sept. 1, those drivers face a three-day licence suspension and a three-day vehicle seizure. The suspensions and seizures become lengthier after each subsequent offence.

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