

TO: MBACC Members
RE: Memorial Day Weekend 2015



As you know, the Myrtle Beach area faces a serious issue regarding Memorial Day Weekend events and activities. With the exception of one community, our local governments have made it clear they do not welcome nor condone the illegal and inappropriate behavior that has become commonplace during that weekend. We support their stance and have been very clear in our communications regarding this issue. (See July member newsletter, Grand Strander, Page 6, http://www.myrtlebeachareachamber.com/member/grand_strander/docs/july2014web.pdf.)

For the past three months, local government officials and law enforcement personnel have been building plans to better manage the traffic problems and other issues that we experience during this weekend. As you are aware, the issues that arise are somewhat unique to that particular weekend and require a comprehensive plan of action to ensure safety throughout our community. The plan unveiled by the City of Myrtle Beach for Memorial Day Weekend 2015 includes:

- One-way southbound traffic on Ocean Boulevard in Myrtle Beach during peak times;
- A "traffic circle" (including Highways 544, 31, 22) providing visitors a flowing loop of traffic which will help prevent traffic congestion and related problems;
- A traffic chute on/near 29th Avenue North to direct traffic onto Ocean Boulevard and other areas;
- An emergency lane on Ocean Boulevard;
- Barriers along Ocean Boulevard to separate pedestrian traffic from vehicular traffic;
- A heavier presence of highway patrol officers to saturate certain areas of high congestion;
- Twice daily litter pickup along Ocean Boulevard;
- A plan for transporting and processing more arrests;
- A storage plan for vehicles that are towed.

These details were released by the City of Myrtle Beach. A coordinated plan of action is being developed with other local governments, including Horry County, the Town of Surfside Beach and the City of North Myrtle Beach. Of course, a key element to the 2015 plans is a sizeable increase in law enforcement. Myrtle Beach City Council approved a measure to increase property taxes to help pay for a new \$1.6 million security plan the city plans to put into effect next Memorial Day Weekend. The state of South Carolina has indicated it will significantly increase its presence by sending more law enforcement officers from various agencies. Local governments will also be in contact with outside law enforcement agencies and private security firms to obtain the necessary number of law enforcement officers.

These plans will create new challenges for residents, businesses, employees and visitors. We must all work closely with local government to ensure these plans are effectively implemented and local laws/ordinances are enforced. While some may view the changes as inconvenient or imperfect, if these measures save one life they will be well worth any hassles. Likewise, please consider two key points:

Dear, Brad, 7015056 5036333

- 1) With additional law enforcement comes the need for additional housing. If you are able to offer housing for law enforcement officers during Memorial Day Weekend 2015, please contact us at 843-916-7288.
- 2) Business owners/operators are encouraged to re-evaluate business security plans. If the plans laid out by the city are successful, they may push more visitors to private property (e.g., parking lots). Some properties have struggled to maintain an atmosphere of safety and that necessary task will be more challenging in 2015. If you would like information on what firms offer private security personnel for hire, please contact us at 843-916-7288.

We wholeheartedly support the proactive approach taken by local governments in handling this situation. We believe these measures are necessary and very important. As a community, we simply must resolve the issues surrounding Memorial Day Weekend and restore safety to our community. We are prepared to do all we can to help solve this problem and we hope you will join us in this effort.

Respectfully yours,



Brad Dean, President & CEO
Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce