

CHP/ Agency takes to the roads

From Page 16

Besides traffic law enforcement, the CHP provides security for state leaders and infrastructure, since merging with the California State Police in 1995 and taking on the responsibilities of federal Homeland Security last year. But the biggest problems in south county, he said, are speeders, drunken drivers and unlicensed motorists.

“Thirty percent of fatal collisions are caused by unlicensed drivers,” Starkey said. “Another 20 percent are caused by drunk drivers. That would be 21 lives (countywide) in 2005.”

He said that while 93 percent of Monterey County residents wear seatbelts, half of the people who died in vehicle accidents last year weren't wearing one.

Large area presents a challenge

Mann said south county's rural layout presents another challenge. With 775 miles of

CALIFORNIA HIGHWAY PATROL

Monterey area

n **STAFFING:** 60 officers, 10 supervisors, 18 civilian support staff.

n **LOCATION:** Blanco Road and Abbott Street, Salinas.

King City area

n **STAFFING:** 24 officers and supervisors, four civilian support staff.

n **LOCATION:** 2 Broadway Circle, King City.

n **ONLINE:** www.chp.ca.gov.

road to cover in their state-issued Ford Crown Victorias, officers are sometimes spread thin.

“But the population hasn't grown that much, so demands for service aren't overwhelming,” he said.

Mann said the department is looking forward to upcoming

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— **Officer Larry Starkey,**
Monterey-area spokesman for the CHP

state money that will help upgrade radio equipment and recruit more officers. Both Mann and Starkey said the work offers big rewards.

“Officers who live in south county feel they're keeping their family, friends and community safe by working in that area,” Starkey said.

Mann agreed.
“I have a great squad down here. The guys go out and work their tails off every day to

provide the best service to people in Monterey County and those passing through,” he said. “King City is a wonderful community. The countryside is beautiful. We patrol some fantastic stretches of highway. I keep telling my guys, ‘I'm reclaiming the years I got carved off my life in other offices.’”

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