



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DECEMBER DWI ENFORCEMENT EFFORT MADE FOR 2,655 NOT-SO-HAPPY HOLIDAYS

ST. PAUL — A December-long statewide DWI enforcement effort resulted in 2,655 DWI arrests. The average alcohol-concentration of the DWI offenders was 0.14 — nearly twice the legal limit of 0.08. Preliminary arrest totals were reported by 331 of around 400 participating agencies. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) coordinated the effort.

A DWI can cost up to \$20,000 when factoring in associated fees and increased insurance rates.

The statewide enhanced impaired driving enforcement also resulted in 1,653 seat belt non-use citations. DPS included the seat belt focus to counter unbelted nighttime fatalities, which are especially prevalent in alcohol-related crashes. Of the impaired drivers and their passengers killed in alcohol-related crashes during 2005–2007, more than 70 percent were not wearing seat belts.

“State law enforcement officers are committed to making our roads safer by arresting impaired drivers,” says Jean Ryan, alcohol programs coordinator of DPS Office of Traffic Safety. “These enforcement efforts are aimed to prevent tragedies and encourage people to plan for a safe ride.”

Enhanced DWI patrols will continue throughout 2009 in the state’s 13 deadliest counties for alcohol-related crashes: Anoka, Blue Earth, Crow Wing, Dakota, Hennepin, Itasca, Ramsey, Rice, St. Louis, Sherburne, Stearns, Washington and Wright.

The Minnesota State Patrol made 420 DWI arrests during the campaign. Among metro agencies, Minneapolis Police Department made 69 DWI arrests, followed by the police departments of Bloomington (51), St. Paul (51), and Burnsville (41). In greater Minnesota, St. Cloud Police Department made 45 DWI arrests, followed Mankato PD (39), Moorhead PD (38), and Rochester PD (35).

Over the last three years in Minnesota, 2005–2007, alcohol-related crashes accounted for 553 traffic deaths and 1,253 serious injuries — and 117,764 motorists were arrested for DWI.

The December DWI enforcement was funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and is a component of the state’s cornerstone traffic safety initiative, *Toward Zero Deaths*.

Drunk Driving — Over the Limit. Under Arrest.

Editor’s Note: Request DWI arrests by agency — email nathan.bowie@state.mn.us or lisa.husom@state.mn.us

- Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement
- Bureau of Criminal Apprehension
- Driver and Vehicle Services
- Emergency Communication Networks
- Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- Minnesota State Patrol
- Office of Communications
- Office of Justice Programs
- Office of Traffic Safety
- State Fire Marshal