



NEWS RELEASE

Andy Skoogman, Director of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 17, 2009

CONTACT:

Nathan Bowie, 651-201-7571

GIVE A “SAFE-LIFT GIFT” WITH THE DESIGNATED DRIVER GIFT CARD *Holiday Weekends Typically Dangerous Nights for Impaired Drivers*

ST. PAUL — The Department of Public Safety (DPS) is encouraging Minnesotans to “give a gift of a safe lift” by offering to be a designated driver for the holidays. DPS says family and friends can make this commitment to safe roads by sending *Designated Driver Gift Cards*, available at www.MinnesotaSafeandSober.org. DPS is trumpeting the cards as a “life-saving gift,” and critical as holiday weekends historically have a high volume of DWI arrests and impaired driving activity.

Around 400 Minnesota law enforcement agencies continue a December-long DWI crackdown and expect a spike in arrests during the next two weekends. Specifically, during weekends prior to Christmas over the last three years (2006–2008), 1,735 motorists were arrested for DWI, or an average of 193 arrests a day — nearly double the average rate of 100 arrests per day for 2008.

“The basis for many DWI arrests is that people don’t plan for a sober ride home,” says Jean Ryan, alcohol programs coordinator of DPS Office of Traffic Safety. “The gift cards allow people to lock in a safe driver and enjoy their holiday activities without endangering others.”

Designated Driver Gift Card-givers agree to “merrily offer their designated driver services” to the recipient on a given date. When received online, recipients are prompted to return the favor of a safe ride. DPS officials note that while designated drive cards costs gift-givers nothing out-of-pocket, the value of the gift could be priceless.

The *Designated Driver Gift Cards* will be distributed statewide to liquor stores, bars and other retailers by DPS and its law enforcement partners; Minnesota Beer Wholesalers Association; Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association; and the Minnesota Municipal Beverage Association. The cards also will be available at the Metrodome during Vikings December home games.



Editor’s Note: To download PDF artwork of the *Designated Driver Gift Cards* and video/audio clips about the cards and the DWI enforcement, visit: <https://mndeptpublicsafety.sharefile.com/d-s39752d4183f4d619>

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