



NEWS RELEASE

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158 DWI ARRESTS IN MARCH DURING ENHANCED PATROLS

ST. PAUL — Enhanced DWI patrols conducted in the state's [13 counties with the most alcohol-related deaths and serious injuries](#) resulted in 158 DWI arrests in March — with 40 percent stemming from arrests on St. Patrick's Day.

Halfway through the 12-month increased patrol program that began in October, law enforcement personnel in the 13 targeted counties have arrested 874 motorists for DWI. Overall, the enforcement has resulted in 17,313 vehicle stops and 4,890 citations for various violations such as seat belt non-use.

In March, participating officers working overtime patrols stopped 2,866 vehicles and issued 846 citations for traffic- and equipment-related violations.

“Enhanced DWI patrols are an effective way to prevent impaired driving, but to make the greatest impact on reducing these deaths and injuries, everyone needs to make smart and safe decisions,” says State Patrol Lt. Eric Roeske.

Through September, the State Patrol, county sheriff offices and municipal agencies will combine resources to increase DWI patrols in 13 counties that accounted for more than half of the state's alcohol-related deaths (254) and half of the state's serious injuries (506) during 2007–2009: [Anoka](#) (22 alcohol-related deaths/51 alcohol-related serious injuries); [Carver](#) (13/12); [Dakota](#) (20/33); [Hennepin](#) (61/144); [Itasca](#) (11/15); [Olmsted](#) (15/30); [Ramsey](#) (19/54); [Rice](#) (3/29); [St. Louis](#) (26/55); [Scott](#) (12/24); [Stearns](#) (11/20); [Washington](#) (13/23); and [Wright](#) (28/16).

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety directs extra enforcement toward Minnesota counties with the highest combined number of alcohol-related deaths and serious injuries to have the biggest impact on impaired driving behavior.

Each year in the state, alcohol-related crashes account for more than 140 deaths — one-third of the state's annual total — and 300 serious injuries, costing the state around \$250 million. More than 30,000 motorists are arrested for DWI annually. A DWI offense can result in loss of license for up to a year, thousands in costs and possible jail time.

Enhanced DWI patrols are a component of the state's core traffic safety initiative, [Toward Zero Deaths \(TZD\)](#). A primary vision of the TZD program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes — education, enforcement, engineering and emergency trauma response.

To-date in 2011 there has been 54 traffic deaths compared to 61 at this time in 2010.

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Editor's Note: Download county-specific results for vehicle stops, citations and DWI arrests at the link below. Data include DWI enforcement totals for Oct.–March and March alone:

<https://mndeptpublicsafety.sharefile.com/d/s58998c167ef436eb>.

Download county-specific maps plotting alcohol-related deaths and serious injuries here:

http://www.dps.state.mn.us/ots/enforcement_programs/NightCAP/default.asp

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