



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **JULY-LONG DWI ENFORCEMENT SWEEP UNCORKED THIS WEEKEND**

ST. PAUL — Increased impaired driving patrols will hit Minnesota roads throughout July, one of the deadliest months for alcohol-related crashes. The statewide enhanced impaired driving enforcement sweep is administered by the Department of Public Safety (DPS) and will include around 400 law enforcement agencies patrolling extra hours. The campaign covers the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday weekend.

Over the last three years in Minnesota, (2004–2006), 540 motorists were killed in alcohol-related crashes and more than 113,000 were arrested for DWI. In July alone during this period, 67 motorists were killed in alcohol-related crashes and more than 10,000 were arrested for DWI. In all, 500,395 Minnesota motorists have a DWI — one in eight with a driver's record.

“Extra DWI patrols will address impaired driving when the behavior is at its peak,” says Cheri Marti, DPS Office of Traffic Safety director. Summer is the deadliest time on Minnesota roads, and a jump in impaired driving is a significant factor. “Failing to make smart, safe decisions by driving impaired results in roads becoming potential death corridors.”

Marti adds that seat belt non-use is prevalent in alcohol-related fatalities, and as a result, officers will include belt enforcement in July. Of the impaired drivers and their passengers killed in alcohol-related crashes over the last three years, over 70 percent were not wearing seat belts. Of all Minnesota nighttime traffic deaths (9 a.m.–3 a.m.) during 2004–2006, 66 percent of the victims were unbelted.

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

Alcohol  
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Office of  
Communications

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Justice  
Programs

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Traffic Safety

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Marshal

The July enforcement will be accompanied by TV, radio, online and outdoor paid media.

Supporting the campaign is [www.minnesotasafeandsober.org](http://www.minnesotasafeandsober.org), a new DPS website that allows visitors to send friends an electronic “Designated Driver Gift Certificate” to offer a safe ride for a night out. The cards ask the recipient to return the favor. DPS today also named the first-ever “DWI Enforcer All-Star Team” comprised of 32 officers, deputies and troopers that lead the state in DWI arrests. For a list of the all-star team, as well as their stats and photos, visit [www.dps.state.mn.us/ots](http://www.dps.state.mn.us/ots), or email [nathan.bowie@state.mn.us](mailto:nathan.bowie@state.mn.us).

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

Drunk Driving — Over the Limit. Under Arrest.