



NEWS RELEASE

Andy Skoogman, Director of Communications

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CONTACT:

Nathan Bowie, 651-201-7571

Lisa Husom, 651-201-7570

1,873 BUSTED DURING END-OF-SUMMER DWI CRACKDOWN

ST. PAUL — An Aug. 21–Sept. 7 statewide DWI enforcement campaign resulted in 1,873 DWI arrests — more than 100 DWIs a day. The average alcohol-concentration of the DWI offenders was 0.16 — twice the legal limit of 0.08. Preliminary arrest totals were reported by 326 of around 400 participating agencies. The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) coordinated the effort.

A DWI results in loss of license for at least 90 days and can cost up to \$20,000 when factoring in associated fees and increased insurance rates. Each year in Minnesota up to 200 people are killed in alcohol-related crashes and more than 35,000 are arrested for DWI.

The DWI enforcement crackdown also resulted in 3,035 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 2006–2008, more than 70 percent were not wearing seat belts.

DPS officials say the state's primary seat belt law not only encourages belt use, but can also help prevent alcohol-related fatalities. The primary law requires belt use for drivers and all passengers. Law enforcement can stop motorists if anyone in a vehicle is not belted, including passengers.

"A majority of the impaired drivers killed in crashes are also not buckled up," says Cheri Marti director of the DPS Office of Traffic Safety. "The primary law gives officers another tool to stop impaired drivers before they cause serious damage down the road."

The Minnesota State Patrol made 284 DWI arrests during the campaign. Among metro agencies, Minneapolis Police Department arrested 55 motorists for DWI, followed by St. Paul Police (49), Bloomington Police (37), and Hennepin County Sheriff's Office (31). In greater Minnesota, White Earth Tribal Police arrested 28 motorists for DWI, followed by Rochester Police Department (22), Cass County Sheriff's Office (19), Mankato Police (19), and Stearns County Sheriff's Office (18).

The enforcement is a federally funded campaign and a component of the state's cornerstone traffic safety program — *Toward Zero Deaths (TZD)*. TZD uses a multidisciplinary approach to focus on four strategic areas to reduce crashes — enhanced enforcement campaigns, education, engineering improvements, and effective emergency trauma response.



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