



NEWS RELEASE

Doug Neville, Director of Communications

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONTACT:

Nathan Bowie, 651-201-7571

675 ARRESTED FOR DWI MIDWAY THROUGH STATEWIDE CAMPAIGN

Increased Patrols Continue through New Year's Eve

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ST. PAUL —Midway through a December-long statewide increased DWI enforcement campaign, preliminary reports from 170 law enforcement agencies indicate 675 motorist DWI arrests. In all, around 400 agencies are conducting the increased patrols through New Year's Eve.

The Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) Office of Traffic Safety is coordinating the campaign that is supported by \$350,000 in federal funds — translating to 7,000 extra hours of enforcement.

In Minnesota during the month of December, 2007–2009, alcohol-related crashes accounted for 34 traffic deaths. During this same period, 8,503 motorists were arrested for DWI.

Consequences for a DWI include loss of license for up to a year, up to \$20,000 in legal costs and heightened insurance rates, and possible jail time.

Each year, alcohol-related crashes account for more than 140 traffic deaths and nearly 400 serious injuries. These crashes and fatalities have been declining in recent years, and DPS officials say enhanced DWI enforcement campaigns have been a major factor in Minnesota's continuing trend of lower alcohol-related traffic deaths.

The December DWI enforcement is a component of the state's core traffic safety initiative, [Toward Zero Deaths \(TZD\)](#). A primary vision of the TZD program is to sculpt a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which all motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behaviors. TZD focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes — education, enforcement, engineering and emergency trauma response. To-date, there have been 388 traffic deaths in Minnesota compared to 389 at this time in 2009.

