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SUPER BOWL SUNDAY MEANS DRUNK **DRIVING FOR MANY**

OVER 40-PERCENT OF SUPER BOWL SUNDAY TRAFFIC DEATHS ARE ALCOHOL-RELATED

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AREA GROUP OFFERS TIPS TO COMBAT DRUNK DRIVING DURING SUPER BOWL WEEKEND

McLean, VA, Feb. 2 – While the teams, site and times have been finalized, local advocates are urging the public to also develop a game plan to prevent drunk driving during this weekend's Super Bowl activities.

According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) figures, 41-percent of all U.S. traffic fatalities occurring during the National Football League's (NFL) 2005 Super Bowl game were alcohol-related. (Locally and annually, 25.4% of all Greater Washington traffic deaths are alcohol-related [2005].)

“Because Super Bowl Sunday has been thrown in to the annals of deadly drunk driving periods, it's equally important to have a game-plan off the field as well as on to combat this too often deadly opposition,” said Kurt Gregory Erickson, President of the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), a 25-year-old public-private partnership combating drunk driving. ***“Whether it be a football opponent or a drunk driver, one's best offense is a good defense.”***

The McLean, Virginia-based nonprofit organization has issued a number of “safe celebrating” tips to prevent drunk driving during this weekend's “Super Bowl Sunday,” February 4, 2007. These tips include:

- **Plan ahead and designate a driver** if you're celebrating with alcohol.
- **Use alternative transportation** like taxi cabs.
- **Be a responsible host by:**
 - ✓ **Not serving anyone who appears to be impaired.**

- ✓ **Serving food with alcohol** (high protein foods like meats and cheeses stay in the stomach longer thereby slowing the body's alcohol absorption rate).
 - ✓ **Using a non-carbonated base in alcoholic punches** (the body absorbs alcohol faster when mixed with carbonization).
 - ✓ **Serving non-alcoholic beverages** as an option.
 - ✓ **Never serving minors.**
 - ✓ **Closing the bar at least an hour before the event's end.**
 - ✓ **Designate a bartender / don't let guests mix their own drinks.**
 - ✓ **And never allowing impaired guest to get behind the wheel.**
- **Report drunk drivers.** (*Maryland and Virginia law enforcement professionals both encourage the use of the "#77 feature" on wireless telephones for motorists to report suspected drunk drivers. In D.C., dialing "311" is encouraged for the same.*)
 - **Wear your seatbelt.**

"Wearing a seatbelt may not be widely viewed as a tool in this effort but the wearing of a seatbelt may be your best defense against a drunk driver," said Erickson. ***"The bottom-line is that the routine wearing of seatbelts is the single most effective measure to reduce crash-related deaths and injuries."***

Founded in 1982, the Washington Regional Alcohol Program is an award-winning public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington-metropolitan area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area's alcohol-related traffic deaths consistently lower than the national average. WRAP, however, may best be known to area residents via the organization's popular free cab ride service for would-be drunk drivers, *SoberRide*. For more information, visit WRAP's web site at www.wrap.org.

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