

CONTACTS: Kurt Gregory Erickson
President

PHONE: W. 703 / 893-0461
CELL. 703 / 625-2303

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SUPER BOWL SUNDAY MEANS DRUNK DRIVING FOR MANY

***NEARLY HALF OF ALL TRAFFIC DEATHS ON
GAME DAY CAUSED BY DRUNK DRIVERS***

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

McLean, VA, Jan. 27 – While the teams, site and time have been finalized, local traffic safety advocates are urging the public to also develop a game plan to prevent drunk driving during the upcoming Super Bowl weekend.

During Super Bowl Sunday, 49% of all U.S. traffic fatalities are alcohol-related according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.*

“With nearly half of all U.S. traffic deaths being caused by drunk drivers during Super Bowl Sunday, it’s important to have a game-plan both on and off the field to combat this too often deadly opposition,” said Kurt Gregory Erickson, President of the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), a 28-year-old public-private partnership combating drunk driving.

The McLean, Virginia-based organization has issued a number of “safe celebrating” tips to prevent drunk driving during “Super Bowl Sunday,” scheduled for February 7, 2010. These tips include:

- **Plan ahead and designate a driver** if you’re celebrating with alcohol.
- **Use alternative transportation** like taxi cabs.

(more)

- **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.** (*District and Maryland law enforcement professionals both encourage the dialing of "911" for motorists to report suspected drunk drivers. In Virginia, the use of the "#77 feature" on wireless telephones 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**.

* Source: NHTSA, see: <http://www.stopimpaireddriving.org/planners/sbs2010/index.cfm>