

CONTACT: Kurt Gregory Erickson
President

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

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FREE ST. PATRICK'S DAY CAB RIDES OFFERED IN GREATER WASHINGTON TO CURB DRUNK DRIVING

OVER A THIRD OF ALL U.S. TRAFFIC DEATHS ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY ARE ALCOHOL-RELATED

Washington, D.C., Mar. 5 – Preparing to combat that time of year when more than a third (37%) of all U.S. traffic deaths are alcohol related*, free cab rides will be offered to would-be drunk drivers throughout the Washington-metropolitan area on Saturday, March 17th (St. Patrick's Day).

Offered by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), the St. Patty's Day *SoberRide* program will be in operation beginning at 6:00 pm on Saturday, March 17th (St. Patrick's Day) and continue until 6:00 am the following day as a way to keep local roads safe from impaired drivers during this traditionally high-risk holiday.

During this 12-hour period, area residents celebrating with alcohol may call the toll-free *SoberRide* phone number **1 – 800 – 200 – TAXI** and be afforded a no-cost (up to a \$ 30 fare), safe way home.

AT&T wireless customers can dial **# - TAXI** for the same service. Local taxicab companies throughout the Washington-metropolitan area provide this no-cost service to local residents age 21 and older who otherwise may have attempted to drive home after drinking.

“On Saint Patrick's Day, over a third of all U.S. traffic deaths are caused by drunk drivers,” said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP's President.

SoberRide is offered in the District of Columbia; throughout the Maryland counties of Montgomery and Prince George's; and throughout the Northern Virginia counties of Arlington, Fairfax, (eastern) Loudoun and Prince William.

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Last St. Patrick's Day (2011), 547 persons used WRAP's *SoberRide* service rather than possibly driving home impaired.

Sponsors of this year's St. Patrick's Day *SoberRide* offering include Anheuser-Busch, AT&T, Diageo, MillerCoors, Red Top Cab, Restaurant Association Metropolitan Washington, Volkswagen Group of America and the Washington Area New Automobile Dealers Association.

In addition, seven of the Washington-metropolitan area's better-known Irish restaurants have also united to ensure a safe St. Patrick's Day celebration this year by sponsoring *SoberRide*. These dining establishments include: The Dubliner Restaurant & Pub (DC); Fadó (DC); James Hoban's Irish Restaurant & Bar (DC); Kelly's Irish Times (DC); Martin's Tavern est. 1933 (DC); Murphy's Grand Irish Pubs (DC & VA); and Siné Irish Pub (VA).

Participating taxicab companies include: Alexandria Yellow Cab; Barwood; Fairfax Yellow Cab; Loudoun Yellow Cab; Manassas Cab Company; Red Top Cab; Silver Cab of Prince George's County; Yellow Cab of D.C.; and Yellow Cab of Prince William County.

Commemorating its 30th year in 2012, the nonprofit [501(c)(3)] Washington Regional Alcohol Program is an award-winning public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan region. 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.

Since 1993, WRAP's *SoberRide* program has provided 54,873 free cab rides home to would-be drunk drivers in the Greater Washington area.

For more information, visit www.soberride.com.

(* Source: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, see: <http://www.trafficsafetymarketing.gov/CAMPAIGNS/Drunk+Driving/Buzzed+Driving+is+Drunk+Driving/Saint+Patrick's+Day>)

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