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DUI DEATHS & ARRESTS INCREASE IN GREATER WASHINGTON

*NEW REPORT CITES INCREASE IN LOCAL ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED TRAFFIC FATALITIES
AND ARRESTS PAIRED WITH DECREASE IN DC AREA DUI CRASHES & INJURIES*

Washington, D.C., July 23 – Bucking the national trend of declining drunk driving fatalities, the Washington-metropolitan recorded a double-digit increase in such traffic deaths in 2013 according to a report released today by the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP).

In 2013, Greater Washington recorded 81 alcohol and or drug-impaired traffic fatalities – a more than 19-percent increase in such deaths from the previous year. The number of local arrests made for either driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while intoxicated (DWI) also increased in 2013 totaling 17,724 arrests, a more than two-percent increase from the previous year and the largest number of such arrests recorded in nearly two decades.

Both findings are contained in WRAP's 22nd-annual "How Safe are Our Roads?: Annual Data Report on the Impact of Drunk Driving on Road Safety in the Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Region." The report, originally scheduled for release last December, was prepared by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) and released by the Falls Church, Virginia-based alcohol-education group today.

"While Greater Washington has, since 1982, nearly halved its annual number of alcohol-impaired driving deaths, these most recent upward trends only confirm that the local fight against drunk driving is far from won," said WRAP's President Kurt Erickson.

Findings in today's released report include:

- **FATALITIES:** Local alcohol and or drug-related traffic deaths **increased** between 2012 and 2013 and by 19.12% (68 to 81 respectively). Such counters 2012's 18.07% decrease in such fatalities.
- **CRASHES:** Area traffic crashes attributed to alcohol and or drugs **decreased** by 3.33% between 2012 and 2013 (and from 4,289 to 4,146 such crashes). Such represents a fourth consecutive year decrease in such crashes.

- **INJURIES:** Local alcohol and or drug-related traffic injuries also **decreased** by 4.65% between 2012 and 2013 (and from to 2,299 to 2,192 such injuries). Such counters 2012's 3.55% increase in such injuries.
- **ARRESTS:** Local arrests for either driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while intoxicated (DWI) **increased** by 2.21% between 2012 and 2013 (and from 17,341 to 17,724 such arrests). Such number of local alcohol-related traffic arrests was the largest recorded since 1996 (when 18,216 such arrests were made).

Comparatively, alcohol-impaired driving fatalities decreased nationally by 2.5-percent in 2013 according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/812102.pdf>).

Of the Washington-metropolitan area's 243 total traffic fatalities in 2013, one-third (33.33%) of these roadway deaths were alcohol and or drug-related (.08+ BAC). Comparatively, 2013 national statistics (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) show that 31.1% of total U.S. vehicular fatalities in 2013 were reported as alcohol / drug related (.08+ BAC).

"Today's report should serve as both a rallying cry to address one of Greater Washington's most frequently committed violent crimes, drunk driving, as well as a sobering reminder that the region annually arrests more persons for drunk driving than reside in Chevy Chase and Falls Church, combined," said Erickson.

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. In addition to the nonprofit organization's public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy efforts, WRAP 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.

WRAP's 2014 "How Safe are Our Roads?" report can be found as a PDF file at:

<http://www.wrap.org/pdfs/2014SafeRoadsDataReport.pdf>