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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **LOCAL ANTI-DUI GROUP CALLS FOR SAFETY** **DURING THIS SATURDAY'S 'PERFECT STORM'**

### ***NUMBER OF ALCOHOL-FOCUSED EVENTS THIS WEEKEND EARN PUBLIC CALL FOR SAFETY***

**Washington, DC, May 3** – Calling the combination of this Saturday's Cinco de Mayo, Virginia Gold Cup Races, Kentucky Derby and Crown Royal 400 (Richmond, VA) events as having the makings of a 'perfect storm' when it comes to the potential for drunk driving, a Washington-metropolitan alcohol education group is urging area residents to be aware of the threat of impaired drivers this weekend.

***"The confluence of this weekend's too-often alcohol-focused events has all the makings of a perfect storm when it comes to drunk driving,"*** warned Kurt Gregory Erickson, President of the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP).

According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration figures and since 1999, 43-percent of all U.S. traffic fatalities occurring on the evening of May 5<sup>th</sup> were caused by drunk drivers.

As a means of reducing what WRAP labels as "100-percent preventable," alcohol-related traffic incidents this weekend, the organization is urging residents this weekend to:

- **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** (like high protein foods like meats and cheeses which stay in the stomach longer thereby slowing the body's alcohol absorption rate).

- ✓ **Using a non-carbonated base in alcoholic punches** (as 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](http://www.wrap.org) .