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December DWI Arrests Up 12 Percent

Fairfax County Police Department

Public Information Office

4100 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, Va. 22030

703-246-2253. TTY 703-204-2264. Fax 703-246-4253

FCPD-PIO@fairfaxcounty.gov

www.fairfaxcounty.gov/police

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UPDATE: December DWI Arrests Up 12 Percent

Fairfax County Police officers arrested 358 drunk drivers as part of their Safe December 2011 efforts. Of those arrested the vast majority (150) were young adults between the ages of 21 and 29. Further analysis shows that 28 were between 15 and 20 years old, 82 were 30-39, 55 were 40-49 and 43 were 50 or older.

"Despite all our Safe December education and enforcement efforts, hundreds of drivers chose to drink and drive in Fairfax County, presenting an unacceptable safety risk to us all. Clearly, impaired driving remains a threat and our officers will continue to aggressively pursue violators," said Captain Susan Culin, Commander of the Fairfax County Traffic Division.

Police Target Alcohol Violations for a Safe December 2011

In an effort to keep December 2011 a safe and festive month for all, Fairfax County Police are stepping up alcohol enforcement efforts with extra DWI patrols, sobriety checkpoints and underage alcohol stings. Last December (2010), Fairfax County Police made 317 DWI arrests. Of those 252 were men; 65 were women.

Police urge residents to make their travel plans in advance of holiday parties by designating a sober driver as drunk driving continues to be a serious roadway danger. According to recently compiled Fairfax County data, there have been 546 alcohol-related crashes through October 2011, out of a total of out of 8,214. In 2010, out of 10,471 crashes, 730 of them involved alcohol.

In addition to targeted patrols, DWI checkpoints netted 46 impaired drivers in 2010. Motorists should expect to encounter checkpoints across Fairfax County this month as they are an additional deterrent and educational tool.

"Drunk driving continues to pose a threat to all who drive our roadways," said Captain Susan Culin, Commander of the Fairfax County Traffic Division. "We want the public to know that it continues to be a serious problem and police are out there targeting reckless, illegal driving behaviors."

Despite strict laws governing underage drinking, FCPD cited 246 people under age 21 with driving after illegally consuming alcohol in 2010. Through the third quarter of 2011, there were 193 youthful offenders cited.

To help combat underage alcohol use, the FCPD holds business compliance checks to ensure that businesses are not selling alcohol to minors. In 2010, there were 13 operations held, 227 establishments entered and 38 of those were charged with selling alcohol to minors. That was a 16 percent increase over 2009. On Thursday, December 8, a check was held in the Reston Police District. Police Cadets, under age 21, entered 18 businesses and five of them were charged after selling alcohol to minors.

Police also hold routine "shoulder tap" operations. Of the three shoulder tap operations held in 2010, 15 people chose to purchase alcohol for the juvenile; a 13 percent increase over 2009.

For more information on alcohol enforcement, contact the Public Information Office to set up interviews with Traffic and District Station Commanders. For more information on underage prevention targeting youth, check <http://www.unifiedpreventioncoalition.org/>.

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