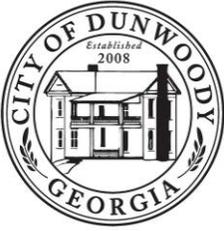


DUNWOODY POLICE DEPARTMENT
41 PERIMETER CENTER EAST, SUITE 100, DUNWOODY, GA 30346



CHIEF OF POLICE
BILLY GROGAN
(678) 382-6900



PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
SGT. MIKE CARLSON
(678) 382-6907

*******For Immediate Release*******

Location: Dunwoody , GA.

Georgia's Zero DUI Tolerance During the Holidays Takes on New Urgency

Authorities Cracking Down To Help Avoid Increase in Traffic Fatalities

In recent years, Georgia has always used the holiday season to reinforce the state's zero tolerance policy for impaired driving. If you're over the limit, you're under arrest. It's that simple.

However, the end of 2012 has brought a new sense of urgency for Georgia besides battling the Christmas shopping crowds and making New Year's resolutions. That's because for the first time in 6 years, Georgia is on track to experience an increase in traffic fatalities. If fatalities maintain their current rate, the state will surpass last year's total of 1,226 deaths on our roadways.

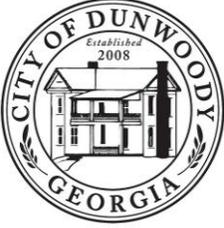
That's why the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS) is adding a special message to its normal enforcement campaign this time of year. In addition to reminding Georgia motorists that if they don't drive sober, they'll get pulled over, GOHS has also launched Operation Safe Holidays to ask our drivers to be extra careful on Georgia roads so the state doesn't reach a 6-year milestone of traffic deaths.

"We always take this time of year to remind motorists that impaired driving is against the law 365 days a year in Georgia," said GOHS Director Harris Blackwood. "And while Operation Zero Tolerance is still effect, we also want to urge everyone to be extra careful as they hit the road this time of year. A great Christmas present for me would be seeing everyone get home safe and sound this holiday season."

And statistics show, the holiday season isn't just dangerous in Georgia. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 2,597 people were killed in traffic crashes across the country in December 2010 and 775 of those were killed in crashes involving alcohol-impaired drivers.

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41 PERIMETER CENTER EAST, SUITE 100, DUNWOODY, GA 30346



CHIEF OF POLICE BILLY GROGAN

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While the loss of life is tragic enough, drunk driving can also create a tremendous financial burden. Statistics show that the average cost of a DUI can climb to nearly \$10,000.

“The fact is that DUI’s are a drain on the state’s resources, the offender’s resources and the resources of any potential victim,” said Director Blackwood. “It’s imperative that Georgia motorists don’t continue their Christmas partying behind the wheel. Law enforcement all over the state will be cracking down on impaired drivers and they will not hesitate to send you to jail, even if it is Christmas.”

“Please know that the decision you make today to get behind the wheel impaired, may have a disastrous, if not deadly, affect on your life or the life of someone else. Be smart. Don’t drive impaired”, said police Chief Billy Grogan.

The good news is there are a few simple tips to get home safely if you plan to drink this holiday season:

- Plan a safe way home *before* the festivities begin;
- Before drinking, designate a sober driver and leave your keys at home;
- If you’re impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation;

Georgia’s annual holiday campaign of Operation Zero Tolerance will last through New Year’s Day. For more information on enforcement activities in your community, contact Sgt. Jason Dove at (678)382-6909 or jason.dove@dunwoodyga.gov. For more information on Operation Zero Tolerance, visit www.gahighwaysafety.org.

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