



MEDIA RELEASE

December 17, 2009

Report Drunk Drivers – Call 911

Vernon F. Betkey, Jr. the Chief, Maryland Highway Safety Office & Maryland Highway Safety Coordinator sent a letter to the Maryland Chief's Of Police Association congratulating them on their efforts in the prevention of drunk driving and the enforcement of drunk driving laws. The State of Maryland achieved a milestone in drunk-driving apprehension and adjudication in 2008, with over 24,000 arrests.

With the approach of the holiday season, December consistently ranks as one of the deadliest months in Maryland for drunk-driving related fatalities. As part of our on-going Checkpoint Strikeforce campaign, the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office in cooperation with the Maryland State Police and the Maryland Highway Safety Administration wishes to raise awareness and *promote personal responsibility* this holiday season.

These agencies are encouraging local partners, business and churches to volunteer to place the following message on their marquee during December's Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month (3D Month):

"Report Drunk Drivers – Call 911"

These companies can even take it a step further by placing the message on their websites, in company newsletters, on holiday party invitations, wherever it can pose as a constant reminder that drunk driving this December 2009 will not be tolerated. The marquee program presents an enormous opportunity to interact with community leaders, including those that represent religious and community interests (and correspondingly those with public marquees). The overall objective is to reduce the needless deaths and injuries associated with drunk driving during the holidays, a time when families come together to celebrate. Let's empower our communities to stop the tragic loss of life because someone makes the mistake of driving after celebrating beyond the limit.

"The men and women of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office support 'Report Drunk Driver - Call 911.' "I urge the citizens of St. Mary's County to join this initiative by promoting responsible behavior, not only during the holiday season but year round. I also encourage local business to support this important campaign and ask that they post the message "Report Drunk Drivers - Call 911" on their marquees and websites." (Sheriff Timothy K. Cameron)

"Maryland has always been a leader in identifying innovative solutions to public safety challenges. I hope that you will consider joining this effort to ensure the safety of all of Maryland's motorists during this upcoming holiday season." (Vernon F. Betkey, Jr., the Chief Maryland Highway Safety Office & Maryland Highway Safety Coordinator)