



NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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Howard County Police to Conduct Sobriety Checkpoint *Part of Several Safe Driving Initiatives this Holiday Season*

The Howard County Police Department's Traffic Enforcement Section is working on several initiatives this holiday season to help keep citizens safe—and sober—on the roads. December is national "3D Month," which is intended to combat drunk and drugged driving throughout the country.

The police department will conduct a sobriety checkpoint at an undisclosed location this weekend. Police have selected the checkpoint location based on the frequency of alcohol-related accidents and the number of arrests for intoxicated driving. The checkpoint will be clearly marked with signs, lights and uniformed officers. Officers will be checking for violations such as driving under the influence of alcohol and failure to use seat belts and child safety seats.

The department is also partnering this month with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) for the annual "Tie One on for Safety" campaign. The campaign encourages motorists to tie a red ribbon to their vehicles as a pledge to drive safe and sober, and to always buckle up while in a vehicle during the holiday season. Howard County officers will help distribute the ribbons with informational brochures about the dangers of drinking and driving.

Police will have extra saturation patrols targeted at impaired driving violations throughout the month and, as always, the Alcohol Enforcement Unit will continue to patrol for underage drinking and underage impaired driving

The holiday period between Thanksgiving and New Year's Eve is one of the busiest on the nation's roads, with a high incidence of alcohol-related traffic fatalities. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), during the 2003 holiday season more than 2,100 people were killed in alcohol-related traffic crashes and/or crashes where safety belts were not used.

Through all of these December programs, the Howard County Police Department hopes to help the county's citizens have a safe and happy holiday season.

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