



News Release

Office of the Dutchess County Executive

22 Market Street ♦ Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
Phone: (845) 486-2000 ♦ Fax: (845) 486-2021

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For Further Information, Contact:

Colleen Pillus, (845) 486-2000 cpillus@dutchessny.gov

Dutchess County STOP- DWI Kickoffs Impaired Driving Enforcement Crackdown

Molinaro: "Don't Drink and Drive. It just is not worth the risk."

Poughkeepsie... Designate a sober driver when celebrating this summer because local law enforcement countywide will be out in force throughout the summer holiday season to arrest impaired drivers. That was the message from Dutchess County Marcus J. Molinaro, local municipal and law officials and traffic safety advocates this morning at a Dutchess County STOP-DWI Program press conference to launch the *"Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over"* enforcement crackdown, a multi-agency coordinated enforcement effort to enhance roadway safety efforts and prevent impaired driving injuries and fatalities in Dutchess County.

"Summer is a great time to enjoy Dutchess County, so we want to make sure our roads are safe for families, residents, and visitors alike. Our community will not tolerate risking lives because of impaired driving," said County Executive Molinaro. "Law enforcement agencies throughout the county will be making sure that those who make the misguided decision to take the party on the road and drive impaired will have the party end in an arrest."



Pictured: front row at podium from left to right: County Executive Marc Molinaro, Dutchess County Legislator and STOP DWI Board member Angela Flesland and STOP DWI Program Coordinator Bill Johnson. Back row: representatives from the following law enforcement agencies: Dutchess County Sheriff's Office, New York State Police, Village of Red Hook, City of Beacon, Town of East Fishkill, Town of Poughkeepsie, Town of Hyde Park and City of Poughkeepsie.

The Dutchess County STOP-DWI Program has been awarded a \$60,000 grant from the NYS STOP-DWI Foundation to participate in the *High Visibility Road Check Project*. The project's intent is to enhance the visibility of the STOP-DWI Program in the community. The road checks will also include assignment of certified Drug Recognition Experts (DRE) to aid in the

identification and apprehension of drivers impaired by drugs other than alcohol. These high visibility road checks will be in addition to the County's coordinated STOP-DWI check point program that runs throughout the year. Seven law enforcement agencies are partnering the STOP-DWI Program to conduct these high visibility road check efforts:

- City of Beacon Police Department
- Town of Poughkeepsie Police Department
- Town of East Fishkill Police Department
- Town of Hyde Park Police Department
- Village of Rhinebeck Police Department
- Dutchess County Sheriff's Office
- New York State Police

This coordinated effort of local law enforcement will increase the number of sobriety checkpoints, roving and saturation patrols, and other non traditional enforcement methods to identify and arrest impaired drivers who put themselves and other at risk. The summer holiday season historically brings a rise in alcohol impaired driving, with the Fourth of July holiday as one of the deadliest holidays of the year due to alcohol impaired driving crashes.

Therefore, law enforcement officials and traffic safety advocates are taking the matter with great seriousness. According to William Johnson, Dutchess County STOP-DWI Program coordinator, “This statewide STOP-DWI Crackdown has one simple message: If you plan on drinking, we strongly recommend you find safe and sober transportation. Plan ahead, take responsibility, and make a decision to keep you, your loved ones, and everyone else on the road safe by designating a sober driver before the fun begins”

The following tips are strongly recommended for those who may be consuming alcohol during summer holiday activities:

- Plan a safe way home before the fun begins;
- Before drinking, designate a sober driver and give that person your keys;
- If you are impaired, use a taxi, call a sober friend or family member, or use public transportation to get home safely; and
- If you see a drunk driver on the road, notify law enforcement immediately.

Dutchess County Legislator and STOP-DWI Board Member Angela Flesland said, “There is never an excuse for driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, so have a plan if you think you might drink and don’t get behind the wheel. The message today is clear... law enforcement will be out and you will be caught.”

“Thank you to all of our partner local law enforcement agencies and officers who will be out enforcing the laws to make our roadways safe. Remember, *Don’t Drink and Drive*. It just is not worth the risk,” concluded County Executive Molinaro.

The Dutchess County STOP DWI Program’s mission is to deter drunk/drugged driving through enhanced enforcement, prosecution, rehabilitation, and education services.

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