

CONTACT: Kurt Gregory Erickson
President

PHONE: W. 703-893-0461
CELL. 703-625-2303

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 22, 2019

GREATER WASHINGTON ANTI-DUI GROUP **URGES SAFETY ON SUPER BOWL SUNDAY**

NEARLY HALF OF ALL U.S. TRAFFIC DEATHS ON GAME DAY INVOLVE DRUNK DRIVERS

Falls Church, VA, Jan. 22– While the teams, site and time have been finalized, a local anti-drunk driving organization is urging the public to also develop a game plan to prevent drunk driving during this year’s “Super Bowl Sunday.”

During Super Bowl Sunday 2017, nearly half (48%) of all U.S. traffic fatalities involved alcohol-impaired drivers according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (see NHTSA chart below).

“With nearly half of all U.S. traffic deaths being caused by drunk drivers during Super Bowl Sunday, it’s important to have a game-plan to defeat this opponent,” said Kurt Gregory Erickson, President of the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP), a 37-year-old public-private partnership combating drunk driving.

The Falls Church-based organization has issued a number of “safe celebrating” tips (below) to prevent drunk driving during “Super Bowl Sunday,” scheduled for February 3, 2019. However, the nonprofit emphasizes that even those *not* drinking during the game can help deter drunk driving by both reporting suspected drunk drivers as well as by wearing their seatbelts.

“Even if you have every confidence in your own ability to not drive impaired, that confidence doesn’t extend to the next driver,” said Erickson. ***“Motorists in Greater Washington whom suspect that they are sharing a roadway with an impaired driver should report such by safely dialing 911 in the District of Columbia or Maryland and #77 in Virginia.”***

“And while you often hear that wearing a seatbelt may be your best defense against a drunk driver, the true bottom-line is that the routine wearing of seatbelts is the single most effective measure to reduce crash-related deaths and injuries.”

For those hosting or attending Super Bowl parties, WRAP’s tips to prevent drunk driving include:

- **Planning ahead and designating a sober driver** if you’re celebrating with alcohol.
- **Using alternative transportation** like ride-sharing services, taxi cabs or public transportation.

- **Being a responsible host by:**
 - ✓ **Never serving anyone who appears to be impaired.**
 - ✓ **Closing the bar at least an hour before the event's end.**
 - ✓ **Designating a sober bartender.** (Don't let guests mix their own drinks.)
 - ✓ **Serving food with alcohol** (high protein foods like meats and cheeses stay in the stomach longer thereby slowing the body's alcohol absorption rate).
 - ✓ **Using a non-carbonated base in alcoholic punches** (the body absorbs alcohol faster when mixed with carbonation).
 - ✓ **Serving non-alcoholic beverages** as an option.
 - ✓ **Never serving minors.**
 - ✓ **And never allowing impaired guest to get behind the wheel.**

While the DUI penalties differ in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia for first-time offenders, such range from fines up to \$2,500, jail terms up to one year and driver's license suspension periods also up to one year.

Founded in 1982, the nonprofit [501(c)(3)] Washington Regional Alcohol Program is a coalition of diverse interests using effective education, innovative programs, and targeted advocacy to end alcohol-impaired driving and underage drinking in the Washington, D.C. metro area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area's alcohol-related traffic deaths historically lower than the national average. WRAP, however, may best be known to area residents via the organization's popular free safe ride service to prevent drunk driving, SoberRide®.

For more information, visit WRAP's web site at www.wrap.org.

**National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System Data
Fatalities in Motor Vehicle Traffic Crashes for February 5, 2017- February 6, 2017
and the Highest BAC in the Crash**

Date	Alcohol-Impaired BAC= .08+		Alcohol-Impaired BAC= .08-.14		Alcohol-Impaired BAC= .15+		*Total Fatalities	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
6am February 5, 2017- 5:59am February 6, 2017	48	48%	11	10%	38	37%	101	100%

*Total fatalities include unknown numbers of fatalities in crash.