



## *news release*

### **TAKING IMPAIRED DRIVERS OFF YUKON ROADWAYS**

**WHITEHORSE, YUKON (Thursday, December 1, 2005)** - The Royal Canadian Mounted Police aims to keep the Yukon's highways safe this holiday season by taking impaired motorists off the streets.

As holiday-related celebrations get underway, the RCMP and the Government of Yukon's Department of Highways and Public Works are joining forces to remind motorists not to drink and drive - whether it be the night of or the morning after an event.

These efforts are in conjunction with National Safe Driving Week. Held between Thursday, December 1 and Wednesday, December 7, National Safe Driving Week aims to educate Yukon citizens on the dangers of impaired driving.

As a result, the RCMP Traffic Services is conducting random check stops throughout the Yukon during the holiday season. The check stops will focus on impaired drivers. Yukon motorists should expect to be asked to blow into a roadside screening device at these check stops.

During recent check stops conducted on November 24 and 25, over 1,800 vehicles were stopped. Twelve drivers received 24-hour driver's licence suspensions. Two additional drivers were charged with impaired driving, their vehicles impounded and their licences suspended for 90 days as per the *Yukon Motor Vehicles Act*. In 2004, over 4,800 vehicles were checked and 16 drivers charged with impaired driving.

"Impaired driving remains the leading criminal cause of death in Canada and it's a completely preventable crime," said Sergeant Ross Milward of RCMP Traffic Services. "Impaired driving kills, and it not only affects those directly involved but it also impacts the families and loved ones who are left behind by the tragedy. We want to remind all drivers not to drink and drive."

"While the overall number of collisions and injuries on Yukon roads is declining, alcohol still remains a substantial factor," said Highways and Public Works Minister Glenn Hart. "Each one of us can do more to prevent this. As a responsible host, a good friend and a loving family member, we can all do our part to ensure nobody gets behind the wheel impaired. If you are hosting a party, be prepared for overnight guests because the only cure for the effects of alcohol is time."

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This year's National Safe Driving Week's theme is "Planning a Safe Ride Home". This week is a Canada Safety Council initiative.

The RCMP is also partnering with the Yukon Liquor Corporation, the department of Highway and Public Works and the Mothers Against Drunk Driving Yukon Chapter to distribute materials promoting responsible holiday drinking and hosting tips.

Locally produced television Public Service Announcements on the consequences of drinking and driving will be aired shortly.

An Impaired Driving Committee involving the private sector, non-government organizations, government departments and the RCMP meets regularly throughout the year to discuss and implement strategies to reduce drinking and driving in the territory.

For more information on how to determine individual drink limits and blood alcohol contents, please refer to the attached fact sheet.

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## *fact sheet*

### IMPAIRED DRIVING: HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Motorists have many tricks for making themselves **feel** like they are sober and alert. Some drink coffee. Others splash cold water on their face. But while they feel alert, chances are these drivers remain a danger to themselves and others.

Alcohol is metabolized by the liver, where enzymes break down the alcohol. Understanding the rate of metabolism is critical to understanding the effects of alcohol. On average, the liver can process one ounce of liquor (or one standard drink) in one hour. That’s one of either: 12 ounces of beer, five ounces of wine or one ounce of liquor in 60 minutes. If a driver consumes more than this, their system becomes saturated, and the additional alcohol accumulates in the blood and body tissues until it can be metabolized.

This is why an individual’s blood alcohol concentration may still be over the legal limit the morning after an evening of heavy drinking. This is why the only real cure for the effects of alcohol is **time**.

Knowing your Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) could mean the difference between life and death. Here is a handy guideline chart for estimating how many drinks one can consume over time. It is important to note that many other factors such as food consumption, medication, sleep or illness, age, body size and gender greatly influence individual’s levels of impairment.

Weight	Male		100	125	150	175	200	225
Pounds	Female	100	120	150	180	210	240	
	Hours	Drinks						
	1	1	1	2	2	3	4	5
	2	.5	1	1	1	1	1	1
	3	.5	.5	.5	1	1	1	1
	4	.5	.5	.5	1	1	1	1
	5	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5
	6	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5

Source: Addictions Research Foundation

