



# **Ortonville Police Department**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **DECEMBER DWI ENFORCEMENT DELIVERS TWO NEW YEAR'S HANGOVERS**

The Ortonville Police Department arrested two impaired motorists during a statewide DWI enforcement effort. About 400 statewide law enforcement agencies participated in the effort conducted by the Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS) Office of Traffic Safety.

“Many motorists continue to make the potentially deadly decision to drive impaired, that’s why DWI enforcement is essential to preventing and stopping alcohol-related crashes,” says Ortonville Chief of Police Jason Mork. “If you can’t make a smart decision to plan for a safe way home, we are going to make sure you face the consequences before you do serious damage.”

Consequences for a DWI include loss of license for up to a year, up to \$20,000 in legal costs and heightened insurance rates, and possible jail time. Stronger DWI sanctions are in effect for all repeat DWI offenders, as well as for motorists arrested for a first-time DWI with a 0.16 and above alcohol-concentration level. Under these sanctions, DWI offenders must use ignition interlock for at least a year or face at least one year without driving privileges. Interlock requires the driver to provide a breath sample under 0.02 for the vehicle to start. Safety officials say interlocks ensure DWI offenders are driving legally and safely. Potential participants of program can learn more at [www.minnesotaignitioninterlock.org](http://www.minnesotaignitioninterlock.org).

In Big Stone County during 2008–2010, alcohol-related crashes accounted for zero deaths and two serious injuries. The economic impact of alcohol-related fatalities and injuries in the county was \$130,000. During the same period, 72 were arrested for DWI.

On average, there were 170 alcohol-related traffic deaths in each of the last five years in Minnesota — accounting for one-third of all state’s total road deaths annually. In 2010, there were 131 alcohol-related deaths, the fewest on record. Each year, more than 30,000 people are arrested for DWI; one in seven Minnesota drivers has a DWI on record.

The DWI enforcement and education effort is funded by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and is a component of the state’s *Toward Zero Deaths (TZD)* traffic safety program. A primary vision of the *TZD* program is to create a safe driving culture in Minnesota in which motorists support a goal of zero road fatalities by practicing and promoting safe and smart driving behavior. *TZD* focuses on the application of four strategic areas to reduce crashes — education, enforcement, engineering and emergency trauma response.

**“To Serve and Protect”**