

## OPP Wraps up Festive R.I.D.E.

Contributed by OPP - Highway Safety Division

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### R.I.D.E. Program Continues To Educate Drivers

In the ongoing effort to educate the motoring public about the dangers attributed to drinking and driving, Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers were out in full force and checked over 1,174,224 vehicles on OPP patrolled roadways during this year's Festive R.I.D.E. (Reduce Impaired Driving Everywhere) initiative.

This year's initiative was conducted from November 27 through to January 4, 2010. In the process, OPP officers issued 432 administrative driver's licence suspensions (ADLS) for criminal code related drinking and driving offences and a further 709 ADL suspensions for a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) in the .05 and .08 range. OPP laid a total of 5,329 charges as a result of this year's initiative, 298 of which were for impaired driving, over .08 BAC or for refusal to comply with a demand to provide a breath sample. The remaining 5,031 charges were for other Criminal Code, Highway Traffic Act, or Liquor Licence Act offences.

Comparatively, during the 2008 Festive R.I.D.E., OPP officers checked 884, 729 vehicles, made 319 arrests for criminal code alcohol related offences and issued 1,137 ADL suspensions.

New to this year's Festive R.I.D.E. program was the Ontario legislation which increased driver's licences suspension periods issued for a BAC between .05 and .08. Previously considered in the "warn range", the legislation introduced in May 2009 prescribes that drivers now subject to a licence suspension which gradates from a minimum 3 to 7 then 30 days for that level of BAC.

"While it appears that the message is slowly getting across to drivers, there are still people who think they are sober enough to drive when they aren't", said OPP Commissioner Julian Fantino in response to the 2009 statistics, "the only truly safe level of alcohol consumption for drivers is none".

While the Festive R.I.D.E. program is over for another year, the OPP wants to remind motorists that drinking and driving is never a good mix. Regular OPP R.I.D.E. programs continue throughout the Province all year long.