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### **DA's Anti-DWI Program to Operate Through the Holiday Season**

Houston, Tx – District Attorney Patricia Lykos announced the start Thursday (Dec. 10) of the anti-DWI “No Refusal” program that will continue throughout the Holiday Season to arrest and charge intoxicated drivers on Harris County roadways.

The program will target DWI motorists during all upcoming weekends, as well as on most Thursdays and other selected peak-traffic periods through Jan. 2. The District Attorney’s Office and Houston Police Department team up in the program to obtain warrants to require DWI suspects to submit to mandatory intoxicant testing, if they decline to provide voluntary samples. In certain situations, no warrant is needed for the tests.

The effectiveness of the deployments can be seen in the statistics. In 2009, the four most recent holiday-related “No Refusal” programs have resulted in more than 900 charges filed for DWI-related offenses.

Test samples obtained through the search warrants show a majority of the offenders have levels of intoxication that are more than twice the legal limit. They frequently show that drivers intoxicated on alcohol also have some other type of controlled substance in their systems.

Catherine Evans, Chief of the District Attorney’s Vehicular Crimes Section, said the program has been instrumental in educating the public that intoxicated drivers can no longer attempt to avoid the consequences of their choices by refusing a breath test. Under state law, anyone who is granted a Texas Driver’s License and is under arrest for a DWI is deemed to have consented to provide breath or blood samples, she said. Certified nurses do the blood draws in sterile quarters.

“This program is designed to help our citizens and their families celebrate the holidays safely, by reducing the dangers posed by intoxicated motorists,” Evans said. “If you choose to drive under the influence during these holidays, you can expect to be arrested and prosecuted fully under the law.”

The current schedule for the No Refusal program includes Thursday, Dec. 10; Friday-Saturday, Dec. 11-12; Thursday-Saturday, Dec. 17-19; Friday-Saturday, Dec. 25-26; and Friday-Saturday, Jan. 1-2.

(end)

