



**KENNETH MAGIDSON**

**DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS**

**Oct. 30, 2008**

**News Release**

District Attorney's Public Information Office:

Donna Hawkins

George Flynn

713-755-3320

**Halloween Weekend Start:**

**DA to Deploy First-ever Mobile DWI Testing Unit**

(Houston, TX) – For the first time ever, the Harris County District Attorney's Office will deploy a mobile blood-analysis unit to enhance its "No Refusal" DWI enforcement program against drunk drivers during the Halloween weekend.

The RV-type unit will be positioned Saturday night (Nov. 1) in north county target areas to expedite on-the-scene testing of DWI suspects for intoxicants.

District Attorney Kenneth Magidson has allocated Asset Forfeiture funds to cover the cost of equipment and related personnel to staff the mobile unit. Prosecutors will be electronically linked to judges to obtain quick warrants for drawing blood samples from motorists who appear to be intoxicated, but refuse requests for testing.

"This sends a clear message of our commitment to vigorously prosecute these crimes," Magidson said. "DWI-related crashes affect us all – innocent families have suffered enormous grief and devastation."

The Harris County Sheriff's Office has outfitted its Mobile Command Station to serve as the blood-testing unit. Warren Diepraam, chief of the DA's Vehicular Crimes Section, said, "This will enable us to take the legal process to the drunken drivers, instead of having the drunks brought to us."

Benefits extend beyond removing dangerous drivers from the streets. Speeding up the process and reducing suspect transit times results in better, more readily available evidence. It can quickly exonerate the innocent, or secure convictions against intoxicated motorists, he said.

Reducing the waits for testing will also increase efficiency by freeing officers sooner for return to patrols, Diepraam added.

On Halloween night (Friday, Oct. 31), blood testing will be conducted at the Houston Police Department's central intoxication section at 61 Reisner St. near downtown.

Mobile testing, which begins Saturday, will be conducted at sites which are now confidential.

If the concentrations of DWIs shift, the mobile unit has the advantage of quickly relocating, Diepraam said. The service is available to all law enforcement agencies with DWI suspects.

(End)