

## Area Police Agencies to Conduct DWI Blanket Patrols

By Thomas J. Carr

Police agencies around the Capital Region will be out in force this holiday weekend conducting DWI blanket patrols. Expect to see increased road patrols along with DWI checkpoints throughout the area.

In Albany County, the patrols will start Friday evening at 7pm and end at 5am Monday morning. Albany County Sheriff Deputies, State Police and 11 other municipal agencies will all be participating. Expect DWI checkpoints throughout the County.

In Saratoga County, the State Park Police will be patrolling the roads in the Spa State Park. Look for checkpoints on the Avenue of the Pines throughout the weekend.

According to Tom Carr, a Partner at Tully Rinckey PLLC in Albany, you can deny a breathalyzer test, but it could cost you your license for up to one year. "You're better off taking the test," says Carr. "It will be easier to fight in court later."

Carr also recommends pulling over as soon as you see the flashing lights behind you as long as it is safe to do so. Also, don't be combative with the officer and to remember that whatever you say can be used against you in court. "If you are drinking this weekend, make sure you have a designated driver," he said.

Over the last several years, DWI laws have become much stricter. The latest example of this is Leandra's Law. Under the law, first-time offenders with a blood alcohol content of .08 or more or under the influence of drugs, and with a child 15 or under in the vehicle, will automatically have their driver's license suspended. They will also have to install an ignition interlock device in their car and may be charged with a Class E felony, punishable up to four years in prison.

Carr says the advice he gives to his clients is simple. "If you have been drinking and you think you are ok, you're probably not ok to drive."