

# Press Release

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## **A RECORD YEAR FOR STATE'S SAFERIDE PROGRAM**

MADISON, WI, SEPTEMBER 11, 2008: The number of SafeRides given to patrons exceeded 45,000 last year. "That's an increase of 22%", said Pete Madland, Executive Director of the Tavern League of Wisconsin. "It is the premier program in the country and we are very proud to be a part of it".

45,562 rides were given to people who may have felt impaired. The total cost of the rides was \$370,908, which meant an average of \$8.14. Forty-six counties now participate in the program. The total cost of the program last year was \$492,307. Funding for the program comes from a surcharge on all OWI convictions. The Department of Transportation distributes the funds and the Tavern League of Wisconsin administers the program for its members. Local Tavern Leagues must match the funds it receives from the state, dollar for dollar.

"Our members believe in the program and work hard to support it". Local leagues conduct various fundraisers throughout the year to raise money for the SafeRide Program. "We feel it is money well spent", said Madland.

To use the program, people who feel they are impaired can contact the bartender and request a ride. If the tavern is a participating member, a taxicab will be called to provide a free ride home. In areas where a cab service is not available, "Good Samaritan" drivers will provide transportation.

While the number of rides increased, the total cost of implementation dropped from \$530,153 to \$492,307. "We have been able to get more efficient on how to run our programs, while also eliminating abuses".

Rob Swearingen, President of the Tavern League of Wisconsin, says "This is a program that prevents accidents and saves lives and we encourage anyone feeling impaired to use the program whenever possible".

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