

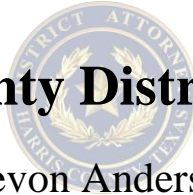
Belinda Hill
First Assistant

Immediate Release
July 23rd, 2014

Criminal Justice Center
1201 Franklin, Suite 600
Houston, Texas 77002

Harris County District Attorney

Devon Anderson



Contact

Camille Hepola

Jeff McShan

En Español: Will Mejia

Maritza Antu

W: (713) 755-0122

DA Office Awarded Annual Grant for No Refusal Initiative

32 Intoxicated manslaughters between January and June 2014

District Attorney Devon Anderson announced today that her office has been awarded nearly a half a million dollars in funding for the No Refusal initiatives. The funding is provided by the Texas Department of Transportation by way of a federal grant.

Under the No Refusal initiative, extra prosecutors are assigned to help law enforcement obtain a search warrant to draw the blood of any suspected intoxicated driver who refuses to take a Breathalyzer test or to give a blood sample. In April 2013, the Harris County District Attorney's Office became one of the first District Attorney's Offices in this region to enact a no refusal policy every day.

"Harris County has a serious problem with intoxicated drivers. This grant arms us with more resources to combat DWI related offenses and to obtain the best evidence in those cases. This will help reduce the number of intoxicated drivers on Harris County roads," said DA Anderson. "However, we still need the community's help: please do not allow a friend or family member to drink and drive. Always drink responsibly and designate a sober driver."

On Tuesday morning, the Harris County Commissioner's Court accepted the \$449,300.03 grant award from the Texas Department of Transportation.

"I would like to commend the County Commissioners for accepting this grant for yet another year," said DA Anderson. "We will continue to hold No Refusal initiatives throughout the year until we can reduce the number of impaired drivers on the roads and the number of victims impacted or killed by their bad decisions."

Harris County continues to top the list of counties nationwide with the most DWI-related fatalities. The goal of the no refusal initiatives is to reduce the number of impaired drivers on the road, to lower the number of DWI-related crimes, and to save lives.