

DWI: First offense could cost \$16,000 for court and other fees

Star Telegram
Dec.30th 2008

Texas continues to lead the nation in alcohol-related crashes. They kill more than 1,500 motorists and injure more than 63,000 each year, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Motorists arrested for drunken driving will find out that it could be expensive, costing more than an estimated \$16,000 for first-time offenders who fight the charge in court, according to the Tarrant County district attorney's office.

Tarrant County Assistant District Attorney Richard Alpert said Monday that motorists do not intend to drive drunk at the start of an evening.

"But a few drinks later, their judgment is impaired," Alpert said. "They don't realize how costly it can get even if they don't get into an accident."

A motorist convicted of DWI for the first time who wasn't involved in an accident could pay more than \$16,000 in court costs and other related fees, according to statistics from the district attorney's office. That cost increases and a motorist could face jail time with each additional DWI arrest, the data show. And drunken drivers stand a good chance of being caught, according to the DPS. Last year, during the Christmas and New Year's Day holidays, state troopers made more than 900 DWI arrests.