



# DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

# NEWS

## OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

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The U.S. Department of Transportation Broadcast News Service for Monday, June 4, has part six, the conclusion, of the series on the drinking driver.

The Fairfax County Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Project, called ASAP, is aimed at removing the menace of the drunk driver from the road and rehabilitating him. It is one of 35 such projects financed by the Department of Transportation across the nation. Fairfax Judge Quin S. Elson commented on the problem and the program.

"I think the use of alcohol, or the abuse of alcohol, in operating a motor vehicle on highways and streets is so widespread that it probably reaches into almost every family in the United States. I would say that one of the best things the program has done has been in the area of advertising the fact that there is a program and there is a problem and something is being done about it. And I think that it has done a great job in educating the population -- although they really knew it to begin with, they didn't want to admit it -- but I think it has done a great deal in educating the population as to the need for a program and this program has been developed in that fashion."

Judge Elson also talked about what the Fairfax County ASAP and its system of pre-trial testing and treatment has meant to the courts.

"In our system in this country, a defendant, unless he wishes to, cannot testify against himself. And in most instances a court is faced only with those facts which come before the court through the production of evidence and does not go beyond that particular level. And as far as screening these individuals, I think this probably what we've been doing for years, only after a person has been convicted of a crime -- trying to figure out what to do with him. Now, this is great -- trying to figure out what to do with him before the conviction. And then you have a great deal of resources as a judge to work with after the conviction of whatever level offense the prosecutor wants to proceed at."

For further information on the ASAP series call 202-426-4333

This has been the Transportation News Report.

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