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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Man Falls Asleep at Wheel, Crashes with Semi on Freeway Arrested for Fourth OWI Offense Within Five Years

Milwaukee, WI – Milwaukee County Sheriff's deputies arrested Jason J. Zirbel, age 39 of Green Bay, just after 1:00 p.m. today for his fourth Operating While Intoxicated offense within five years. His prior OWI convictions occurred in February 2000, December 2007 and April 2008.

A sheriff's deputy responded to a report of a car versus semi tractor-trailer crash on northbound I-43 at West County Line Road. The deputy noted that the operator of the car had red, glassy eyes, smelled strongly of an alcoholic beverage, stated that he had been "drinking all day" and must have "dozed off." The investigation at the scene revealed that the driver of the car fell asleep at the wheel, drove off the freeway into a grassy area, and then veered back into traffic where he struck the semi tractor-trailer.

He was transported to Froedtert Hospital for a blood draw and then conveyed to the County Correctional Facility-Central. His condition prevented the deputy from conducting field sobriety tests or a PBT.

Wisconsin Act 100 strengthened Wisconsin's drunk driving laws. The provisions of Act 100 apply to violations that occur on or after July 1, 2010. A fourth offense Operating While Intoxicated (OWI) becomes a felony if it occurs within five years of an earlier offense.

If convicted of his fourth OWI offense, Zirbel faces a Class H Felony with up to 6 years imprisonment.

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