



David A. Clarke Jr.
Sheriff

Milwaukee County Sheriff's Office

NEWS RELEASE

Fran McLaughlin
Public Information Officer
Cell: 414-254-9488
Phone: 414-278-5226
fran.mclaughlin@milwenty.com



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Deputies Injured in Crash Caused by Drunken Driver 1000th Repeat Offender Since January 2010



Milwaukee, WI – Today at about 2:45 a.m., a deputy attempted to stop a violator he saw driving the wrong way, heading southbound in the northbound lanes, on N. Mayfair Road just south of Bluemound Road in Wauwatosa. The vehicle cut across the construction zone to get to the eastbound I94 ramp at Highway 100 and did not stop for the deputy.

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The subject vehicle, a Ford Taurus, swerved through all lanes of traffic, and the high speed pursuit reached speeds of 109 mph. The vehicle exited at S. 70th Street, re-entered the freeway at 68th Street, and again exited at S. Hawley Road to Vliet Street. Multiple squads responded to assist with the pursuit as the vehicle headed east on Vliet Street to US-41 southbound.

The driver, Kevin B. Hutchins, age 40, of Milwaukee, lost control of his vehicle between the southbound-through lanes and the ramp from the North to the East, striking attenuator barrels and the median wall. His vehicle went airborne and collided with the deputy's squad, striking the front window and injuring the deputy. The Taurus then came to a rest facing north on the ramp in the Stadium Interchange, almost seven miles into the pursuit.

The second squad involved in the pursuit struck the attenuator barrels that were airborne and thrown into traffic lanes after being hit by the Taurus. Her squad came to rest in the southbound-through lanes in the Stadium interchange.

Hutchins was uncooperative, belligerent and verbally abusive to the deputies and the Milwaukee Fire Department emergency responders. He smelled strongly of an alcoholic beverage, but refused to say where he had been drinking.

One deputy was conveyed to Froedtert Hospital for injuries received in the crash which resulted in medical restrictions preventing him from returning to duty. The deputy in the second squad was treated for minor injuries and returned to duty. Hutchins was also conveyed to the hospital for evaluation and treatment of minor injuries.

Prior to the forced blood draw, Hutchins grabbed an emergency room nurse and scratched him, drawing blood from the nurse's hand. Hutchins has an extensive criminal history.

Hutchins was booked at the Milwaukee County Jail on the charges of OWI-3rd - Causing Great Bodily Harm, Recklessly Endangering Safety, Fleeing from Officer, Battery to Emergency Medical Care Provider, OWI-Refusal, and Resisting/Obstructing. His prior drunken driving convictions were in March 2008 and November 2009. If convicted of all charges he faces potential penalties of up to 32 years and nine months in prison.

This 1000th repeat offender highlights the dangers the deputies and the general public face from drunken drivers. DUI legislation was strengthened in 2010, and the MCSO began to tally the repeat offenders who are not deterred from continuing to drive drunk. The District Attorney's Office successfully prosecutes about 99% of the drunken driving cases in the county. The weak link has been the lenient sentencing by the Milwaukee County judiciary. Prior to the 2010 law, the average sentence for a DUI-4th was nine months. After the law went into effect making DUI-4th within five years a felony, the average sentence was only seven months.

Law enforcement gets it and the sheriff conducts DUI-task forces, the District Attorney's Office gets it with aggressive prosecution, but the judiciary continues to be the escape hatch for drunken drivers.

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