



# CITY OF HOUSTON

## Municipal Courts Department

Annise Parker

Mayor

900 Bagby  
Houston, Texas 77002

Telephone – Dial 3-1-1  
[www.houstontx.gov](http://www.houstontx.gov)

## NEWS RELEASE

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**Contact:**

**Gwendolyn Goins, Public Information Officer**

Municipal Courts Department

**(713) 247-4114**

### **Municipal Courts, *Watch Ur BAC* Team Up for Alcohol Awareness**

HOUSTON, Texas – The City of Houston Municipal Courts Department will host the ***Watch Ur BAC Alcohol Awareness Program*** at the Herbert W. Gee Municipal Courthouse located in Downtown Houston tomorrow, June 19, 2012 at 10:00am. The public is invited to view and participate in several activities designed to educate drivers about the effects drinking has on driving.

*“As part of our ongoing efforts to meet the public’s need for education in public safety, we have invited Watch Ur BAC to bring their alcohol awareness program to the City of Houston Municipal Courts,”* stated the Honorable Barbara E. Hartle, Director and Presiding Judge of the Municipal Courts Department. *“Anything we can do to change people’s minds about getting behind the wheel of a car while intoxicated will be well worth the effort,”* said Judge Hartle.

The ***Watch Ur Bac*** campaign is a free, grant-funded program available through Texas AgriLife Extension Service. It is specifically designed to teach Texans about the dangers of alcohol misuse, including binge drinking, alcohol poisoning and impaired driving. The program’s name refers to the blood alcohol concentration (BAC), which is used to measure the degree of intoxication of an individual. A display will be set up to inform adults and youth of the amounts of alcohol by volume that is contained in beer, wine and liquor.

A DWI Simulator will be used to demonstrate the effect of alcohol on driving skills. Through a video game atmosphere, drivers experience obstacles and hazards to simulate those that one might encounter if driving intoxicated. To further duplicate the effect of alcohol on one’s vision, Fatal Vision© goggles are also worn by the driver during the simulation. Together, these resources mimic the impairment of drunk driving, while safely onsite at the courthouse.

*“Given that last year in Texas alone, 1,075 people were killed in alcohol-related crashes, and hundreds of thousands more were injured, our hope in bringing this program to the courts is that it will ultimately save lives,”* said Judge Hartle.

The program display and simulator will be set up on the basement level of the Herbert W. Gee Municipal Courthouse at 1400 Lubbock from 10am until 4pm, Tuesday June 19<sup>th</sup>. The event is open to the public.

For more information about the ***Watch Ur BAC*** program, call 979-862-1911. For more information about

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the City of Houston Municipal Courts, visit their website at [www.houstontx.gov/courts](http://www.houstontx.gov/courts).