

N.D. AG: Drunken Driver Testing Successful

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Daily alcohol breath tests for chronic drunken drivers may be available statewide by summer, and some judges have begun imposing the requirement in domestic violence cases, Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem said Wednesday.

Stenehjem spoke to a North Dakota legislative committee, which includes law enforcement officers and judges, that is studying alternative approaches to deterring and punishing crime.

Counties in south-central North Dakota have conducted such tests for almost two years. It was recently expanded to north-eastern North Dakota, including Grand Forks County, and is expected to start in Cass County, North Dakota's largest, in June.

It mostly affects North Dakotans arrested multiple times for drunken driving. As a condi-

tion of remaining free on bond, participants are ordered to take breath tests twice a day, seven days a week, at their local sheriff's office.

Each test costs \$1. Participants blow into a plastic tube attached to a device that immediately shows their blood-alcohol level. The test usually takes less than a minute, said Burleigh County Sheriff's Sgt. Troy Karlberg, who supervises the Bismarck program.

If a test shows a person has been drinking, he or she is jailed, pending a court appearance.

Last year, the Legislature expanded the program's reach to include offenders arrested for domestic violence, child neglect and other crimes that can involve alcohol. Stenehjem said some judges are ordering offenders in such cases to submit to daily testing as a condition of their bail.

Since January 2008, 314 of the 482 participants in the testing program have successfully completed it, and 72 are still active, Stenehjem said. The rest flunked at least one alcohol test.

Participants have taken more than 33,000 tests and passed almost 99 percent of them, he said.

South Dakota began a similar program in February 2005. In Pennington County alone, where Rapid City is located, the program handles 439 people daily who take breath tests, said manager Tessa Johnston.

Of those taking breath tests, 299 are tested in the mornings and evenings, and 140 are tested once daily, Johnston said.

Karlberg and Morton County Sheriff Dave Shipman said they believe the North Dakota initiative has been working well.

COUGAR

From Page 1

Black Hills. The one that was outside the Hills was in Gregory County. Only one in 2009 was a true prairie harvest.

In addition, there are no documented kittens born outside the Black Hills, he said.

The GF&P focuses its study on the Black Hills. Kanta said.

"The habitat is ideal along the Missouri River Corridor. But we don't study outside the Black Hills except for mortality," he said. "We're not going to manage the mountain lion outside the Black Hills."

In response to a question, Kanta said a few incidents have been recorded where mountain lions have taken down livestock. However, he sees the cougars as a small factor.

Kanta also doesn't see mountain lions as a major contributing factor to sheep deaths.

"As far as true-blue livestock producers, there are only a few instances," he said. "We don't see where (the cougars) strike out on the prairie and it's a big issue with livestock producers."

The estimated population of cougars in the Black Hills has grown from about 50 in 1997 to about 250 in 2007 and 2009, Kanta said.

"We are saturated with mountain lions in the Black Hills," he said.

The SDGF&P estimates the Black Hills cougars included an estimated 38 males, 102 females and 110 dependent young.

A typical mountain lion will kill about 45 large mammals a year, Kanta said, with the GF&P estimating the 140 adult cougars accounting for about 6,300 kills last year.

Cougars have been documented as scavenging for food sources, he added.

New research uses collars with tracking devices, making use of a satellite and Global Positioning System (GPS), Kanta said. The satellite collars lasts about 2 1/2 to 3 years, he said.

Officials document the mountain lions' travel corridors, with about 95 percent of young males dispersing to northwest of the Black Hills, he said.

The GF&P has spent \$1.5 mil-

lion on researching the mountain lion since 1998, Kanta said.

"A lot of states look at our study," he said. "We have a good sample size."

The harvest limit was increased from 1997-2007, which began to stabilize the mountain lion population, Kanta said.

"We harvested 40 mountain lions in the Black Hills during the 2010 season," he said. "With a harvest of 40 mountain lions, you start to decrease the mountain lion population."

The cougars were classified as a state threatened species in 1978. The mountain lions were removed from the state's list and re-classified as a game animal in 2003.

"People worried that it would be open season and a free-for-all," Kanta said.

However, those fears weren't realized. Mountain lion numbers have increased dramatically in recent years and have now stabilized, he said.

With the increased numbers in the Black Hills, a mountain lion's home range size has decreased by about half since 1999, Kanta said. That has led to an overlapping of home ranges, he said.

The males' home range has gone from 293 square miles to 165 square miles, while the females' home range has gone from 70 square miles to 40 square miles.

Kanta said there is no consistent pattern of sighting cougars from one season to another.

"During the spring and summer, you would think there would be more sightings with

more tourists and people outdoors," he said. "But there are no peaks there. It just ebbs and flows over time."

Kanta described the characteristics of the mountain lion, including a long tail measuring up to two-thirds of the body length.

Kanta uses the special feature as a barometer when receiving reports of mountain lion sightings from the general public.

"If we get a report, I start to ask questions," he said. "If you don't mention the tail, I think you may have seen something else."

He added that mountain lion tracks have been confused with dog tracks.

Kanta reported that 2,000 mountain-lion licenses were purchased in the past year.

"The (sales) get lower every year, but now we have the true-blue mountain lion hunters," he said.

Kanta encouraged the public to fill out and return the GF&P mountain lion management survey, which can be sent to the GF&P at 523 E. Capitol, Pierre SD 57501.

Another GF&P meeting will be held from 7-9 p.m. tonight (Thursday) at the MTI Tech Center in Mitchell.

More information on the mountain lion survey can be found at www.sdgifp.info.



AM 1450
MORNING COFFEE
WEEKDAYS 7-9 AM
MONDAY-FRIDAY
Friday, March 26
7:40 P&D;
8:15 Missouri Valley
Race for Christ
Yankton's Home Team!

ORECK Vacuums

Several Models Available at...



Larry's
APPLIANCE
920 Broadway • 665-9461

SPRING BONUS CASH



NOW GET
\$500
ON ALL 2010 FORD LINCOLN AND MERCURY VEHICLES

FORD LINCOLN MERCURY QUALITY CAN'T BE BEAT BY HONDA OR TOYOTA

 FORD TAURUS UP TO \$ 1500 TOTAL CASH BACK	 FORD FUSION UP TO \$ 2500 TOTAL CASH BACK
 FORD MUSTANG UP TO \$ 3000 TOTAL CASH BACK	 FORD FOCUS UP TO \$ 3500 TOTAL CASH BACK
 FORD EDGE UP TO \$ 4000 TOTAL CASH BACK	 FORD F-150 UP TO \$ 4500 TOTAL CASH BACK
 MERCURY MILAN UP TO \$ 2500 TOTAL CASH BACK	 LINCOLN MKS UP TO \$ 2000 TOTAL CASH BACK
 MERCURY MARINER UP TO \$ 2500 TOTAL CASH BACK	 LINCOLN MKX UP TO \$ 5000 TOTAL CASH BACK

Are your child's ear infections keeping your family up at night?





Find relief at Avera Yankton Ear, Nose and Throat. Dr. Jeff Liudahl specializes in complete care of the head and neck for the whole family.

Call today for an appointment: (605) 665-6820. What do you have to lose? Because we know you can't lose much more sleep.

Avera
Yankton Ear, Nose & Throat

THE TIME IS NOW. THE AUTO SHOW IS HERE.

GET SAVING.

GOING ON NOW THROUGH

APRIL 5TH





Not all buyers will qualify for Ford Credit limited-term financing. \$500 Spring Bonus Cash good only on 2010 Ford, Lincoln, Mercury models. Excludes Fusion Hybrid, Milan Hybrid, Escape Hybrid, Mariner Hybrid, F-150 Raptor and Mustang Shelby GT 500. Residency restrictions apply. For all offers, take new retail delivery from dealerstock by 4/5/10. See dealer for qualifications and complete details.