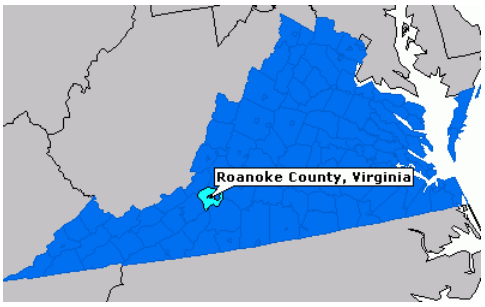
Roanoke County Police Department, VA
Local/State Issue

Stretching across 250.52 square miles, Roanoke County is located in the Commonwealth of Virginia and part of the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the southwestern part of the state. While significant areas of the County are rural and mountainous, most of the residents reside in the suburbs near the independent cities of Roanoke and Salem. Roanoke County is part of the Roanoke Valley which also includes Botetourt County, City of Roanoke, City of Salem, Craig County, Franklin County, and the Town of Vinton. The cities of Roanoke and Salem are located within the boundaries of Roanoke County as is the incorporated Town of Vinton while the remaining jurisdictions surround the County. According to the 2015 census, Roanoke County has a population of 94,409 while there are a total of 312,118 people residing in the Roanoke Valley. The percentage of licensed drivers residing in Roanoke County mirrors that of the entire Roanoke Metropolitan.

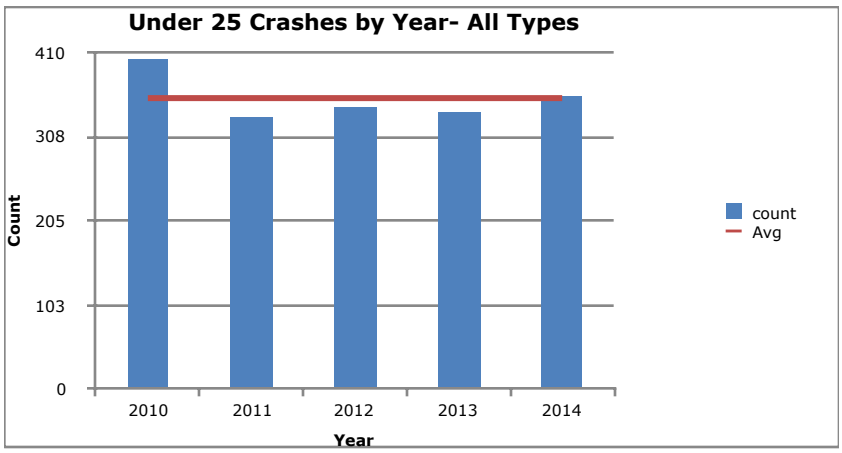


Roanoke County has several major roadways running through its boundaries including Interstates 81 and 581, US routes 11, 220, 221, and 460, as well as seven state routes that serve to connect the ten jurisdictions that are adjacent to Roanoke County.

The Roanoke County Police Department consists of 143 sworn full-time officers, 14 full-time civilians, and 2 part-time civilians. In terms of traffic enforcement, the Department has 86 officers assigned to patrol and four full-time traffic officers.

Problem Identification

Since 2005 the Department has taken many steps to address the crash rate involving drivers 15-24 years of age. Many enforcement programs have been developed to specifically target young drivers while educational initiatives have been created to support those efforts. For 2015, the Department continued the focus on crashes involving a driver under the age of 25 (U25). The below tables and graphs depict the crash data used to identify specific problems for subsequent planning of enforcement and education/public awareness.



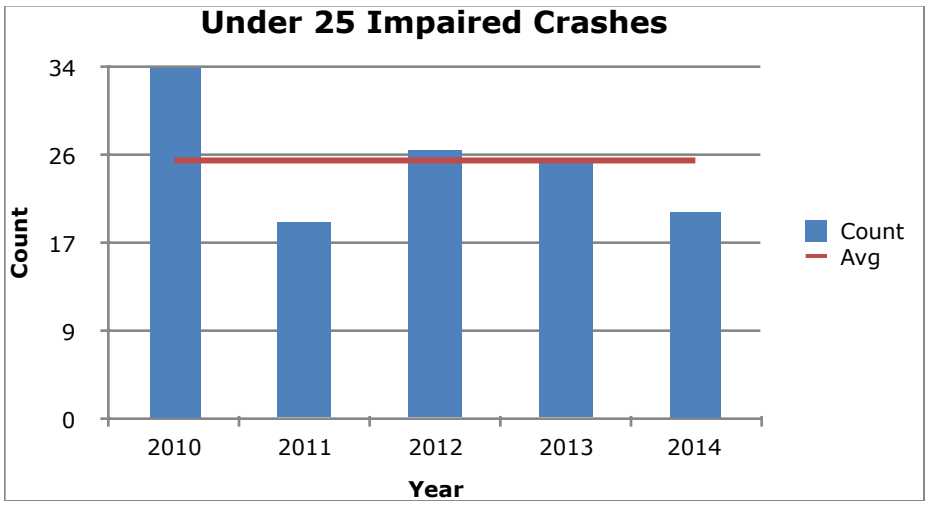
Under 25 Crashes by Year

Year	Fatality	Property Damage	Personal Injury	Total
2010	2	325	74	401
2011	1	245	84	330
2012	1	273	69	343
2013	2	257	79	338
2014	1	263	93	357

The table above shows the number of crashes for drivers under the age of 25 since 2010 in Roanoke County while the table and graph below show the number of impaired drivers from those crashes. A significant portion of the Department's response to U25 crashes was targeting impaired crashes. The high number of impaired driving crashes in 2010 (34) became a baseline for the County's goal to reduce such crashes by 20% and maintain that reduction for at least five years.

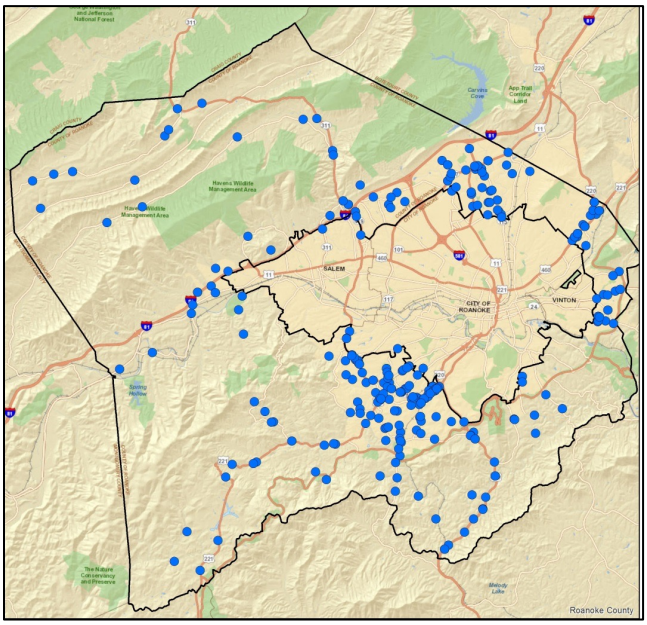
Under 25 Impaired Crashes

Year	Fatality	Property Damage	Personal Injury	Total
2010	0	17	17	34
2011	1	17	1	19
2012	0	22	4	26
2013	1	18	6	25
2014	0	14	6	20



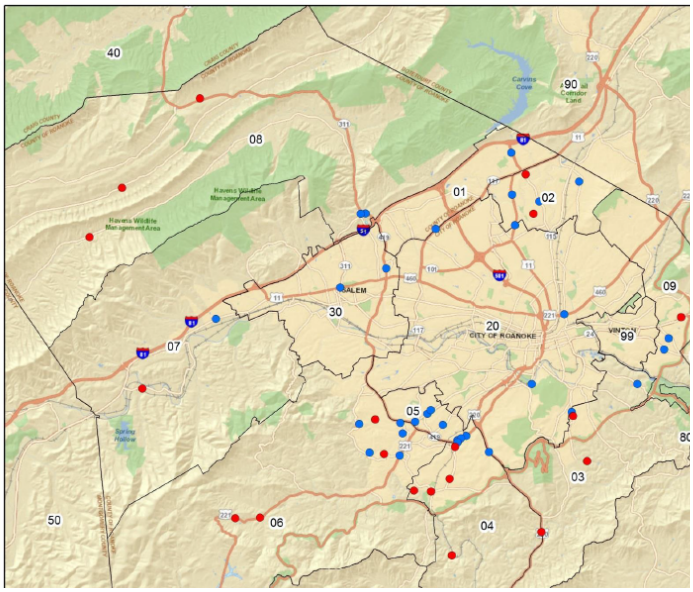
Planning

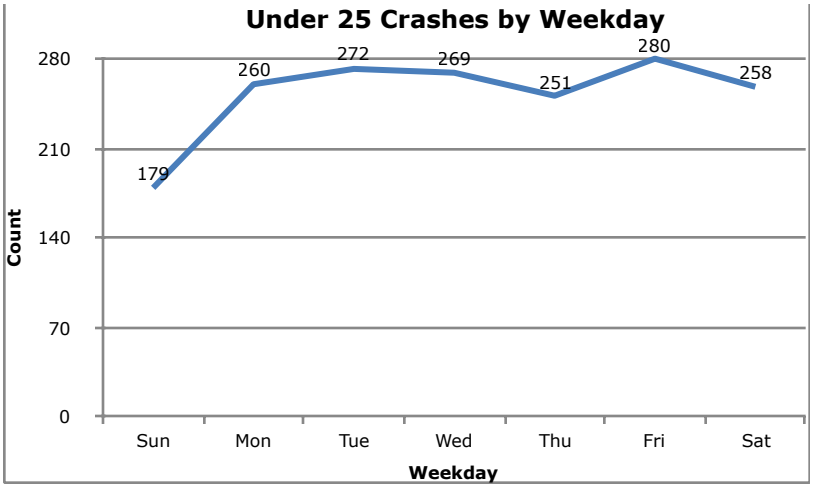
The planning for enforcement and educational efforts to reduce the number of crashes involving a driver under the age of 25 began with a comprehensive analysis of crashes over the last five years as well as specific data from 2014. The map below was created during an analysis of 2014 impaired driving crashes and non-crash related DUI arrests for drivers under the age of 25. This map became the main factor for determining where to deploy saturation patrols and sobriety checkpoints targeting U25 impaired drivers. A review of the crashes from 2010-2014 involving U25 impaired drivers revealed 30-40% of these drivers resided in a neighboring jurisdiction and subsequently a good portion of the enforcement efforts were conducted near jurisdictional boundaries.



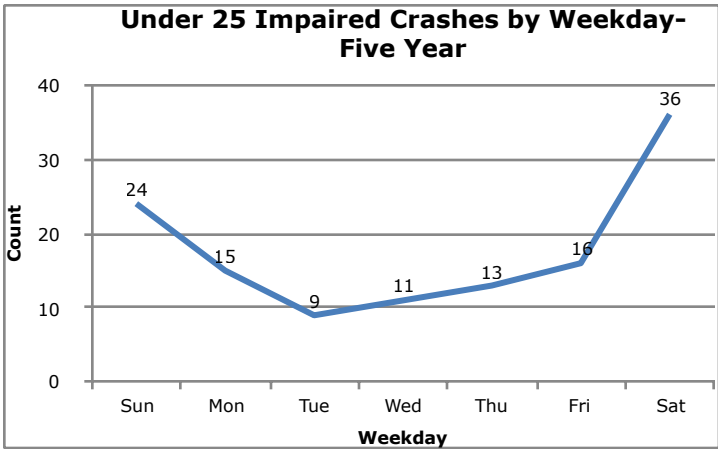
The map at left shows the location of all crashes involving a U25 driver during 2014. The two clusters of such crashes in the north and south sections of the County mirrored the results seen while examining all age groups and factored into the Department's DDACTS program.

The map right shows the location of all U25 impaired driving crashes (red) and all non-crash U25 impaired driving arrests during 2014. This served as the Department's primary template for geographical specific enforcement during 2015.





For enforcement planning of U25 crashes, the five year trend showed a rather equal distribution of crashes on all days of the week with the exception of Sundays.



The graph at left shows the number of U25 impaired driver crashes by weekday over the same five year period. The high rate (48%) on Saturdays was expected but not on Sundays and as such additional enforcement was planned during 2015.

Another component of the Department's approach to the U25 impaired driving problem was to consider the compliance checks that the Virginia Department of Alcohol Beverage Control or the Department had performed over the past few years. These compliance checks involved an underage person attempting to purchase alcohol while monitored by ABC agents or Department officers. The areas of the County with more problems identified during compliance checks was targeted for saturation patrols.

The Department has a long standing relationship with the Prevention Council of Roanoke County; which is a partnership of parents, youth, school, faith, law enforcement, medical and other community leaders. The Prevention Council supported the Department's planning for enforcement and educational efforts by conducting 'Youth Risk Behavior Surveys' focused on alcohol and drug use. Additionally, the Prevention Council sponsored focus groups in Roanoke County, which the Department attended as well. The major themes that came out of these focus groups were as follows: underage drinking is happening largely in residential settings either hidden or with parent approval; alcohol typically came from parents, older siblings, or other friends; regardless of the law, persons under age can "drink responsibly"; and the number one reason to drive after drinking was the need to get home before curfews. Another outcome of the surveys and focus groups was the identification of key events that often led to the consumption of alcohol by young drivers. Some of these events were sports events, graduation

parties, proms, and 'field parties' where teens would gather in rural areas of the County for binge drinking.

Training

The table below shows the training received by officers during 2015 as well as the three years prior. Though there was no training conducted specifically towards U25 enforcement, the impaired driving trying was significant. To date, almost all of the uniformed patrol officers have been trained in SFST.

	2015	2012-2014
SFST Instructor	0	2
SFST Instructor Recert.	1	3
SFST Training	10	44
ARIDE	8	8
Intox. EC/IR II Basic	7	22
Intox. EC/IR II Recert.	39	71

In addition to the above list, officers received additional impaired driving enforcement training during 2015 through line-up, e-mailed power point, and the Department's on-line training tool- 'Moodle'. All uniformed officers received a refresher on the driving cues of an impaired driver as well as HGN. All uniformed officers also received training in implied consent and search warrant blood draws in preparation for the Department's new 'No Refusal' program which is described in the next section. Six officers that routinely work sobriety checkpoints were given a two hour block of training on the identification of impaired drivers at checkpoints to further hone their skills.

Public Information and Education

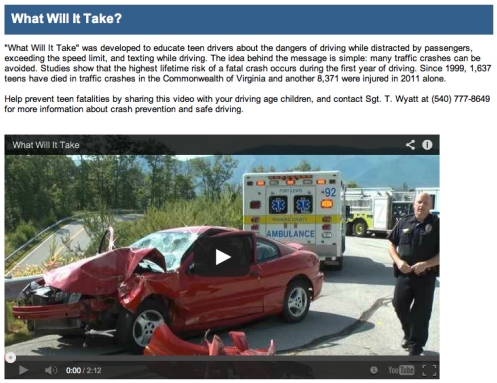
The Roanoke County Police Department has been a leader in law enforcement for Southwestern Virginia in providing public information and educational programs concerning traffic safety issues. Since 2005, the Department has created several educational programs that address crashes involving young drivers and what follows is a brief description of a few of the programs that were conducted during 2015 targeting U25 drivers.

The Department has an impaired driving/distracted driving simulator consisting of a golf cart designed to look like a police vehicle that is utilized with 'Fatal Vision' goggles, which simulate the affects alcohol or drugs have on vision, and a coned course. When utilized for impaired driving presentations, participants are allowed to drive the cart through a coned course without the goggles then a second time with the goggles to show the affects alcohol has on a driver's vision. While participants are waiting in line to drive, another officer will speak about the associated problems of impaired driving and conduct field sobriety testing while the persons are wearing a set of the goggles. During 2015 the Department used the simulator at all five County high schools for a minimum of two days each allowing an estimated 750+ students to participate. Additionally, the simulator was used at more than 15 events during the year to include employee safety fairs, church groups, Boy Scout events, and community events such as

the Vinton Fall Festival with an audience in excess of 1,500 people. At right, PO II Cunningham takes a young driver through the impaired driving course at an event at Tanglewood Mall in May of 2015.

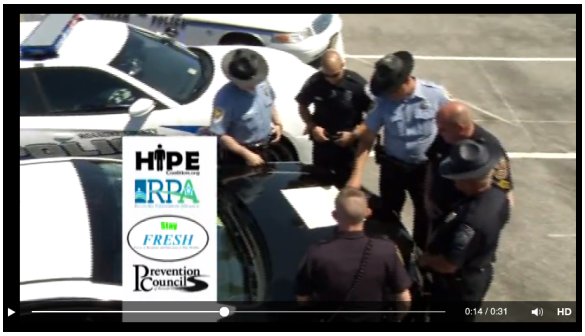
The Department maintains a strong relationship with the Roanoke County Schools which provided many educational opportunities during 2015. Each of the five County high school's Driver's Education class had an officer speak to the class concerning traffic safety. Each school's School Resource Officer (SRO) worked with student clubs to publicize the inherent associated risks of teen driving through outreach efforts including morning/afternoon announcements, artwork and social media, mock car crashes, and floats used in local parades. The SRO at each high school worked closely with the Youth of Virginia Speak Out About Traffic Safety (YOVASO) in support of crash prevention. The Department's School Resource Officers were also very active with the Council for the 'Sticker Shock' program during the year. The SROs would take a team of students from their school to local grocery and convenience stores and place highly visible stickers on alcoholic beverages that warn against purchasing alcohol for minors. Additionally, the Department used the 'ScanEd' program, documented in other categories, in all ten of the County's high and middle schools. Part of the program is devoted to explaining the affects alcohol has on the central nervous system and the subsequent outcome to a person's ability to drive.

The Prevention Council of Roanoke County was a strong partner in the Department's efforts to target U25 drivers in the Department's campaign to reduce impaired driving incidents. The Prevention Council conducted a media campaign focused mostly on big holidays and advertised with TV, radio and theaters, as well as sharing out the messaging on social media: Facebook and Twitter. Use of the media campaign "What's Your Plan" helped to build the capacity among media partners including Fox 21/27, CW5, WSLS10, Comcast, Wheeler Broadcasting, Star Country, Regal Cinemas (advertising spots before movies), as well as online ads through WSLS10.



The Department's award winning 'What Will It Take' video was sent out in mass electronically through social media. The video targets the most common causative factors of teen crashes with a significant message on impaired driving.

At right, a screen shot from a video played multiple times on local media during 2015 that was created about the regional enforcement efforts created to combat the high crash rates of the 15-24 year old driving population. The



message was simple: have a plan to get home safely because law enforcement will have a plan to identify and arrest impaired drivers.

Enforcement

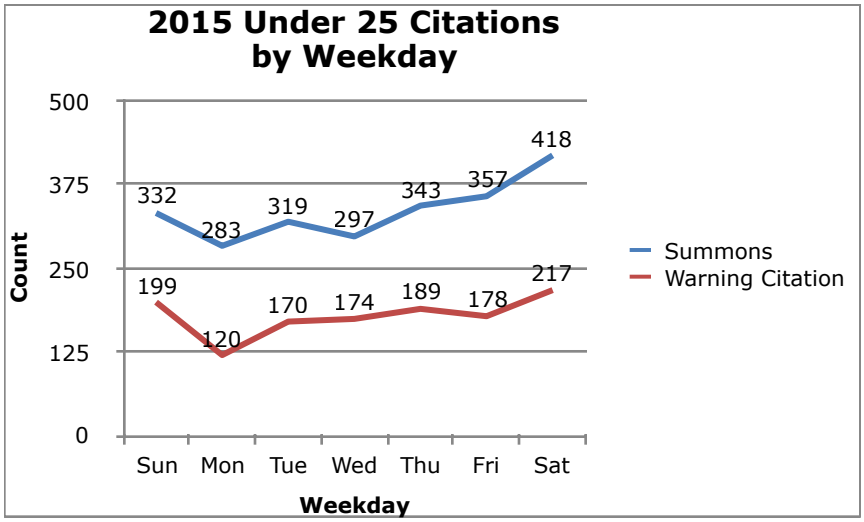
During 2015, the Department conducted more than 100 DUI saturation patrols and conducted 31 sobriety checkpoints. Eighteen of the checkpoints were low manpower; where officers would conduct a checkpoint in a location for maybe two hours then move to another part of the County creating the idea that the checkpoints were 'everywhere'. Ten of the sobriety checkpoints were multi-jurisdictional, such as the one at left staffed by officers from Roanoke City, Roanoke County, Salem City, Town of Vinton, and Virginia State Police. The multi-jurisdictional checkpoints typically attracted a good deal of media attention which allowed the Department to share its simple message- have a plan to get home safely.

Officers arrested 246 impaired drivers during 2015 and 69 of those were under the age of 25. Additionally, officers issued a total of 3,596 citations to such drivers, as shown at right.

2015 Under 25 Citations

Citation Type	Count
Summons	2349
Warning	1247
Total	**3596**

Based upon crash analyzes, officers targeted U25 drivers through both grant funded and regular patrols specifically on Saturdays and Sundays. The graph below shows the number of citations and impaired driving arrests during 2015 by day of week.



Outcomes

The table at right shows the total number of crashes involving a driver under age 25 in 2015. Please note there were no fatalities during the year involving such a driver.

2015 Under 25 Crashes	
Crash Type	**Count**
Property Damage	255
Personal Injury	99
Total	**354**

The table below shows the breakdown by age of drivers under 25 involved in impaired crashes during 2015.

Age	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	25	Total
	1	1	2	0	7	6	2	1	20

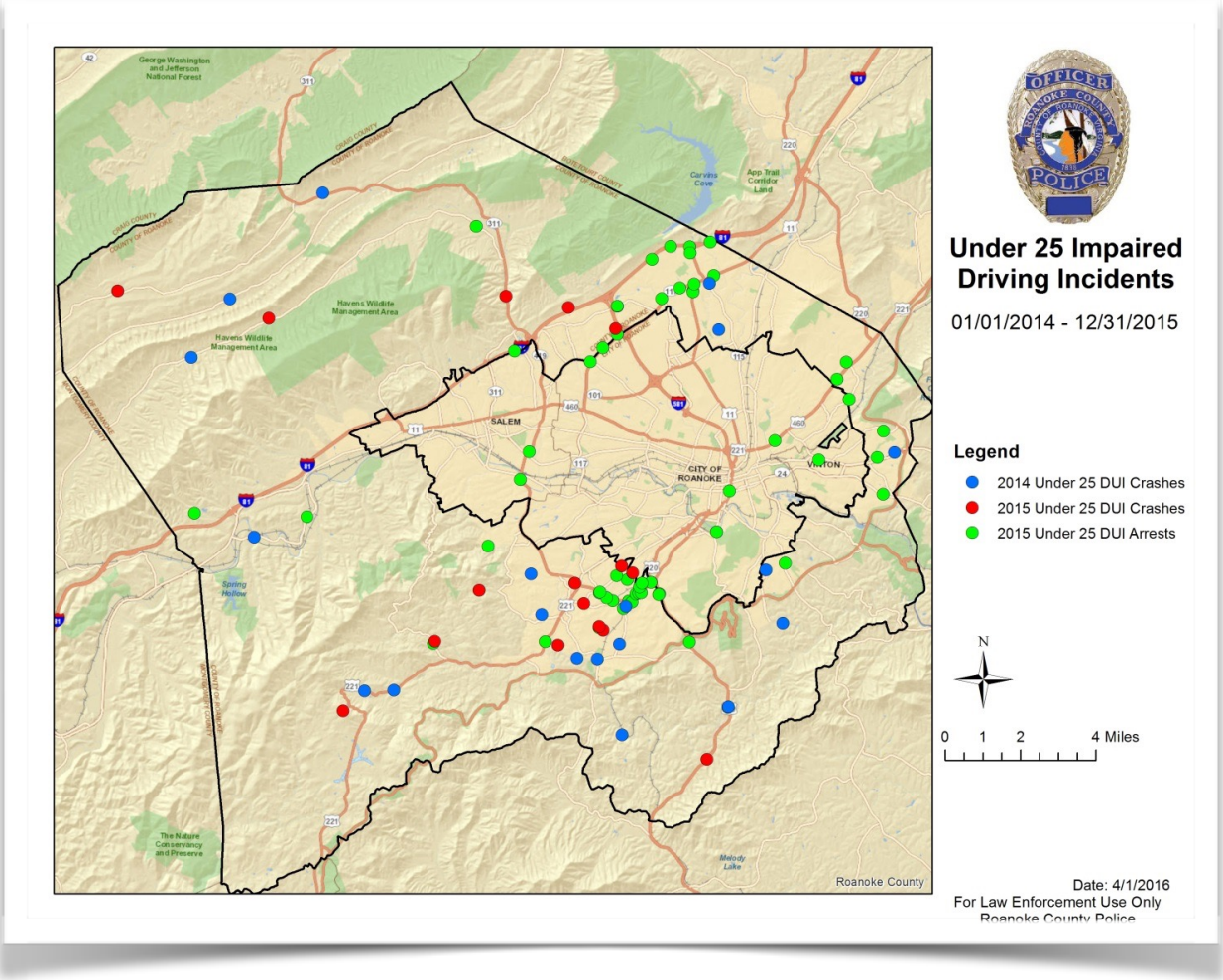
The table below shows additional data concerning impaired drivers under age 25 from 2015 as compared to the past three years.

	2012	2013	2014	3 Year Avg.	2015
A/R Crashes Fatality	0	1	0	0.33	0
A/R Crashes Injury	4	6	6	5.33	6
A/R Crashes Property	22	18	14	18	14
DUI Arrests	94	70	70	78	69

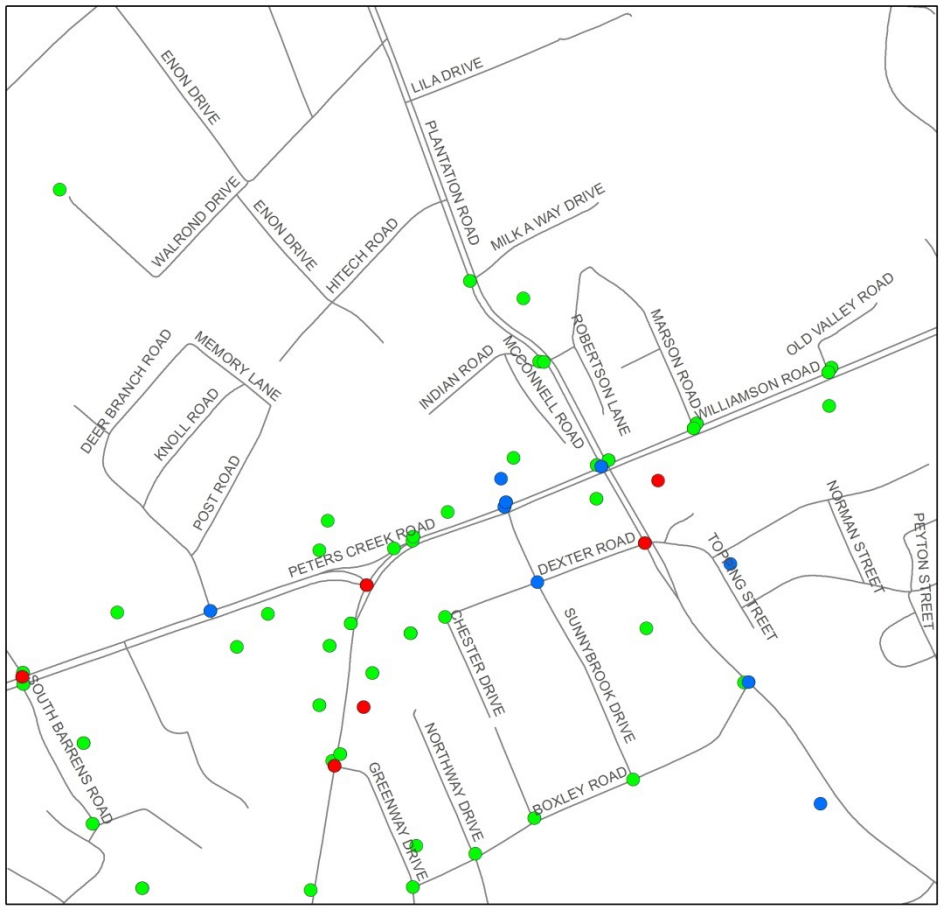
As shown above, the number of impaired driving crashes for U25 drivers in 2015 mirrored the results from 2014. However, the total number of impaired crashes for 2015 was 13% lower than the three year average of 2012-2014. It is important to note that the total number of such crashes was 41% lower than the baseline of 34 in 2010.

The map on the following page shows the locations of impaired crashes involving a driver under 25 during 2014 and 2015 as well as the location of impaired driving arrests for the same age group. Because a crash analysis was performed quarterly during the year, saturation patrols and checkpoints could be sent out dynamically to problem areas. Please note the clusters of arrests near the jurisdictional boundaries of the City of Roanoke and Town of Vinton. As noted

earlier, a high number of U25 impaired crashes involved a driver from those jurisdictions over the past five years.



The map on the next page shows the locations of all types of crashes involving a U25 driver during 2014 and 2015 as well as the locations of all types of traffic citations issued to the same age group during 2015. This area of Roanoke County was chosen for enhanced patrol based upon the number of injury crashes involving such drivers over the past five years and is located in of the Department's two DDACTS zones.



Under 25 Incidents

01/01/2014 - 12/31/2015

Legend

- 2014 Under 25 Crashes
- 2015 Under 25 Crashes
- Under 25 Citations

Date: 4/1/2016
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Roanoke County Police