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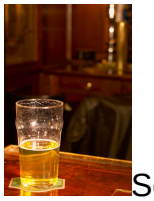
Study concludes South Dakota 24/7 Sobriety Program works

 South Dakota's sobriety program for drunken drivers has reduced repeat cases of driving under the influence by 12 percent and domestic violence rates by nine percent, an independent study concluded.

The 24/7 Sobriety Program was started in 2005, giving people convicted of alcohol-related crimes a chance to stay out of jail as long as they were monitored daily for alcohol use. The study of the first six years done by the RAND Corp. and funded by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism is the first to look at results of the program that has since spread to North Dakota and Montana.

The program requires repeat DUI offenders and others whose crimes are alcohol-related to take twice-daily breath tests to prove their sobriety or to wear alcohol-monitoring bracelets or test through an interlock device installed on their vehicle's ignition system.

By 2010, more than 17,000 people had participated in the program in South Dakota, according to the Argus Leader. In some counties, as many as one in 10 males had participated.

Josh Moeller, of Sioux Falls, is one of them.

Judge Larry Long, who championed the program during his tenure as South Dakota attorney general, said the independent study lends credence to the belief he and others have had in the program from the start. The state has sponsored studies that showed a reduction in repeat offenses, but no outside agency had verified the results.

Source: The Associated Press

To learn more about drinking and driving, click here.