



## Ceres Department of Public Safety

Art de Werk, Chief/Acting City Manager/Director of Public Safety



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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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### **DUI Checkpoint Officers Instrumental in Successful Apprehension of Auto Theft Suspects**

Ceres, California - On December 30, 2011, at 7:00 PM, Ceres Police Officers were setting up a DUI/Drivers License Checkpoint when a stolen vehicle being followed by its owner was reported in the area. Several officers assigned to the checkpoint detail responded and quickly located the vehicle. The vehicle failed to yield to the officers when they attempted to conduct a traffic stop and a police pursuit ensued.

The pursuit lasted for several minutes and reached speeds of 60 mph through residential neighborhoods. Officers safely ended the pursuit by using a pursuit intervention technique. Two male suspects ran from the vehicle in an effort to evade police, but were quickly captured by the officers. The stolen vehicle was recovered and returned to its owner.

The two suspects arrested were parolees: Christopher Garcia, 42 years of Modesto, and Aaron Groomes, 35 years of Empire. They were charged with multiple felonies including auto theft, possession of stolen property, evading law enforcement and parole violations.

Police Chief Art de Werk said, "The DUI/Drivers License Checkpoint program sends a strong message that law enforcement is committed to keeping our roadways as safe as possible. These checkpoints are effective in deterring DUIs, unlicensed drivers, and drivers with suspended licenses, as well as uncovering other criminal offenses. These checkpoints place more law enforcement officers on duty, which improves overall community safety."

Officers involved in the checkpoint were instrumental in this case since they were able to immediately flood the area to quickly recover the stolen vehicle and apprehend the suspects.