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PRESS RELEASE

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The Cumberland County Sheriff's Office is investigating a personal injury vehicle crash that occurred at approximately 00:51am this morning, on Rte 35 in Standish.

At approximately 00:50 this morning, two deputies were sitting in the parking lot of Patches Variety on Rte 35 in Standish. The deputies observed a small vehicle traveling southbound on Rte 35 at an extremely high rate of speed. The visual estimate by one of the deputies was 90-100mph. The deputies attempted to catch the vehicle in question as the operator continued to pass other vehicles also traveling southbound. Approximately 1.5-2 miles after the deputies observed the vehicle, and while still trying to catch up to the vehicle in question, the vehicle attempted to pass several vehicles and while doing so began to skid on the roadway and crashed. The vehicle in question left the roadway on the opposite side of the road and rolled twice before coming to rest on four wheels. No other vehicles were struck.

The operator, Wayne Rowe age 48 from Standish, was transported by the Standish Rescue Unit to Maine Medical Center with head injuries.

An accident re-constructionist from the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office estimated the speed of the 2004 Volkswagon Jetta to be approximately 89 miles per hour during the first part of the vehicles skid. Mr. Rowe's license was under suspension and he refused to submit to a blood alcohol test at the scene.

Mr. Rowe has a fairly extensive driving history to include 16 convictions, including an operating under the influence conviction in 1998 and 14 suspensions. Also, Rowe has a history of at least one failure to submit to a chemical test in the past.

This event exemplifies the attitude of some drivers who clearly believe that their ability to drive on Maine's roadways is a right not a privilege. Rowe's refusal of a blood test this morning depicts the attitude of some drivers that they will drive no matter what condition they are in and regardless of the circumstances. Rowe refused the chemical test, claiming that he didn't have a license, so having his license status suspended in the future was not his concern. Also, his operation of the motor vehicle prior to the crash clearly showed a complete disregard for the safety of others this morning.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Chief Deputy Kevin Joyce at 774-1444, extension 2115.