Roadblocks to begin here
for signs of drunkenness

A sobering message to drinking
drivers: The Baton Rouge Police
Department soon will begin stopping
motorists at roadblocks to check for
signs of drunkenness.

Police Chief Wayne Rogillio said the
roadblocks will begin within 10 days,
although he won’t disclose when or
where the first roadblocks will be set up.

Rogillio said two roadblocks would be
set up the first night and will last from 8
p.m. to 4 a.m.

Richard Redd, the police
department’s legal adviser, said
roadblocks will be set up on roads where
many people have been arrested in the
past for drunken driving, where there is
a lot of traffic volume; and where the
police can safely get traffic off the road,
such as a street that has an access street
or dead-end street nearby.

He said the roadblocks would not be
placed near bars or restaurants that
serve liquor.

“It would be perceived by the public
and businessmen as entrapment, even
though it wouldn’t be,” Redd said.

At the roadblocks, officers will
systematically stop motorists — for
instance, stopping every third or fifth
motorist — and check for signs of
drinking. These include dilated pupils,
flushed complexion, disheveled
appearance, slurred speech, alcohol on
the breath and poor coordination in
removing a license from a wallet.

If a motorist is suspected of drinking,
he will be asked to perform field
sobriety tests, which include touching
the nose with the finger and walking in a
straight line.

It should take a driver not suspected
of drinking about 45 seconds to pass
through the roadblock, Rogillio said.

“Roadblocks will be clearly marked
with orange cones placed on the
roadway, Rogillio said. And there will
be signs, the first one saying “Caution,
police ahead,” the second saying, “Keep
right, expect to stop,” before the
roadblocks.

Drivers who try to make U-turns
before the roadblocks will be followed
by two chase cars and watched for
erratic driving, Rogillio said.

Redd said that roadblocks are being
used in 36 states.