

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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ABC CITES CLERKS FOR SELLING ALCOHOL TO MINORS

Alameda – On February 25, 2005, Investigators from the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) cited three clerks for selling alcoholic beverages to minors. The actions were the result of a compliance check operation in which minors under the direct supervision of the investigators, attempted to purchase alcohol from seven retail licensees in the City of Alameda.

Those who sold to the minor face a minimum fine of \$250, and between 24 and 32 hours of community service for a first violation. In addition, ABC will pursue administrative action against each business's liquor license. Administrative actions may include a fine, a suspension of the liquor license, or the permanent revocation of the license.

The minor decoy was able to purchase alcohol from the following locations:

1. Shorepoint Liquor at 410 Westline Dr.
2. New Rich market at 1544-47 Lincoln Ave.
3. Santa Clara Market at 846 Santa Clara Ave.

ABC is conducting compliance checks statewide to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. Young people under the age of 21 have a higher rate of drunken driving fatalities than the general adult population.

“We must continue to turn up the heat and get these compliance rates up,” said ABC Director Jerry Jolly “Keeping alcohol away from minors is a high priority and we’ll continue these operations in order to hold licensees accountable.”

Minor Decoy operations have been conducted by local law enforcement throughout the state since the 1980's. When the program first began, the violation rate of retail establishments selling to minors was as high as 40 to 50 percent. When conducted on a routine basis, the rate has dropped in some cities as low as 10 percent or even below. The latest violation rate state-wide is almost 24 percent, or nearly one in five retail licensees selling to minors.

In 1994, the California Supreme Court ruled unanimously that use of underage decoys is a valid tool of law enforcement to ensure that liquor licensees are complying with the law.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency.

ABC is a department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Sunne Wright McPeak, a member of the Governor's Cabinet. For more information contact Andrew Gomez in the ABC Oakland District Office at (510)-622-4970.