

**DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL**

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## ABC SUSPENDS LOCAL LIQUOR LICENSE AND FILES CHARGES AGAINST CLERK FOR SALES TO A MINOR IN CONNECTION WITH FATAL CRASH INVESTIGATION

**Desert Hot Springs** - Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Investigators today suspended the liquor license of Amrid Paul, Incorporated, owners of Super One Food Store, 12350 Palm Drive in Desert Hot Springs.

The store license is suspended for 90 days. The store will not be allowed to sell alcohol for the next 30 days, in addition, it will be on probation for one year. If the store has a similar violation then its license could face an additional suspension of 60 days. The department has also filed criminal charges against a store clerk for selling alcohol to a minor. The actions were taken after an investigation by the department's Target Responsibility for Alcohol Connected Emergencies (TRACE) Program. TRACE started the investigation after a fatal car crash in Desert Hot Springs last summer.

"We need to do everything possible to keep these crashes from happening," said ABC Director Jerry Jolly. "The TRACE program is designed to hold licensees and those who furnish alcohol to minors accountable and reduce the chances for these kinds of tragedies."

On June 23, 2004, at about 11:30 pm Felipe Perez Silva, a clerk at the Super One Food Store, 12350 Palm Drive, Desert Hot Springs, sold an 18 pack of Bud Light beer to 19 year old Fernando Guerra. No identification was displayed or shown to Silva.

At about 2:00 am on June 24, 2004, Guerra was involved in a head-on crash that killed him, 17 year old Nicholas Brandon Chevalier and seriously injured 24 year old Wilson Sanchez. A toxicology report showed Guerra's blood alcohol content was .15.

ABC opened a TRACE Investigation and began checking licensed premises nearest the accident scene to determine if Guerra had purchased the alcohol and from what premises. Super One Food Store was the fourth licensed location visited. After speaking to the store owners and gathering evidence, investigators were able to determine that Guerra bought the alcohol from a store clerk at Super One Food Store.

The charge of sales of alcohol to a minor was filed against Felipe Perez Silva in the Riverside Indio Court. Mr. Silva faces a charge of selling alcohol to a minor which could result in a fine and jail time.

An accusation was filed by the Department against Amrid Paul, Inc. for sales of alcohol to a minor which resulted in today's suspension. The penalty for the violation was increased because of the double fatal crash that occurred after the sale of alcohol to Guerra. Toxicology reports confirm the blood alcohol content of Guerra was .15.

TRACE is a program designed to determine the sources of alcohol to individuals under the age of 21 who are involved in crashes, assault, alcohol poisonings, overdoses or other crimes involving death or serious injuries. These investigations target liquor stores, restaurants, bars and adult furnishers who are responsible for selling or furnishing alcoholic beverages to minors.

For more information contact Supervising Investigator Dana Saladen in the ABC Rancho Mirage office at (760) 568-0990.