

**DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL**

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## **Trinity County Ramps up Efforts to Prevent Underage Drinking**

**(Weaverville)** – In a collaborative effort involving educational leaders, health advocates, youth groups, law enforcement and business leaders, Trinity County is attacking the problems associated with underage drinking in an effort to prevent traffic crashes, binge drinking, alcohol poisonings and other alcohol-related incidents.

Scott Morris of Trinity County Behavioral Health Services says community meetings involving the high school organization Friday Night Live, health experts, local law enforcement, business leaders and county residents have been held to educate everyone about the laws of underage drinking and the danger of drinking and driving.

“We’ve had too many teen DUI and alcohol related tragedies over the years and each event has sad and terrible effects on families and the community,” Morris said. “We hope to prevent future tragedies through strong educational efforts. As adults, we must change their social norms around alcohol because youth do as they see.”

“We welcome the efforts of our youth groups, health advocates, business leaders and fellow law enforcement colleagues,” said Trinity County Deputy District Attorney Michael Harper. “The young people in our community are our future leaders and increasing protection through an intense educational push is an excellent strategy.”

In addition to the educational efforts, Investigators of the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) are conducting compliance check to try to prevent sales of alcoholic beverages to minors. The department visited 18 area businesses that are licensed to sell alcohol back on June, 2006. Investigators conducted a minor decoy operation in which a minor under the direct supervision of department investigators, attempted to purchase alcohol from all 18 locations and five sold alcohol to the minor decoy.

Four of those individuals who sold to the minor were issued fines of between \$3000 and \$3370 by a Trinity County Judge. One of those who sold is challenging the penalty.

ABC is also taking administrative action against the business’s alcoholic beverage licenses. That may include a fine, a suspension of the license, or the permanent revocation of the license.

ABC is conducting the compliance checks state-wide to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. Statistics have shown that young people under the age of 21 have a higher rate of drunken driving fatalities than the general adult population.

Funding for the Minor Decoy 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.