

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Four Arrested During Two Separate Decoy Operations in Riverside County

(Riverside County) – Investigators from the California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) and Deputies from the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, Indio Office, made four arrests during two separate operations in Riverside County on May 29 and May 30, 2008. The arrests were made during Decoy Shoulder Tap Operations. Decoys approached 43 individuals and asked them to purchase alcohol for them in the cities of La Quinta, Coachella and unincorporated communities of Thermal and Mecca. One arrest was made in la Quinta, two arrests were made in Coachella and one other arrest was made in Mecca.

The Decoy Shoulder Tap program targets adults who purchase alcohol for people less than 21 years of age. Under the program, a minor under the direct supervision of a peace officer will stand outside a liquor or convenience store and ask patrons to buy them alcohol. The minor indicates in some way he or she is underage and cannot purchase the alcohol. If the adults comply, the peace officers arrest and cite them for furnishing alcohol to the minor.

The penalty for furnishing alcohol to a minor is a minimum \$1,000 fine and 24 hours of community service.

ABC is conducting these operations state-wide to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. The enforcement was part of Operation Save a Teen, a national effort launched by the National Liquor Law Enforcement Association (NLLEA) during the month of May. Underage drinking in the United States is reaching a critical level. Statistics show that in 2005, about 10.8 million persons aged 12-20 (28% of the age *group*) reported drinking alcohol in the past month. Nearly 7.2 million (18.8%) were binge drinkers, and 2.3 million (6%) were heavy drinkers. In the month of May, NLLEA officers will focus on underage drinking enforcement with a goal to save one teen at a time, one incident at a time and one day or night at a time. ¹

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ABC is a department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Dale E. Bonner, a member of the Governor's Cabinet.