

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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ABC Runs Decoy Operations in Attempt to Reduce Underage Drinking *Five Cited in Two Separate Decoy Operations*

(Paso Robles) - Investigators of the California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) along with the Paso Robles Police Department cited three clerks for selling alcohol to minors and also cited two adults who purchased alcohol for minors on March 26, 2009. The actions were the result of a Minor Decoy Operation and Decoy Shoulder Tap Operation.

The Minor Decoy Operation involved minors who worked under the direct supervision of department investigators. The minors attempted to purchase alcohol from twenty retail licensees in the City of Paso Robles. Three locations made illegal sales.

Those who sold to the minor face a minimum fine of \$250, and/or 24 to 32 hours of community service for a first violation. In addition, ABC will take administrative action against the alcoholic beverage license of the business. The penalty may include a fine, a suspension of the license, or the permanent revocation of the license.

In addition to the Minor Decoy Operation, ABC Investigators also conducted a Decoy Shoulder Tap Operation. A Decoy Shoulder Tap Operation 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 agree to purchase alcohol for the minor, investigators then arrest and cite them for furnishing alcohol to the minor. The penalty for furnishing alcohol to a minor is a minimum \$1000 fine and 24 hours of community service. Two persons purchased alcohol and gave it to minors. They were cited for furnishing alcohol to minors.

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.

Minor Decoy operations have been conducted by local law enforcement throughout the state since the 1980's.

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.