

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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ABC Investigators Arrest Three in Santa Maria

Arrests Made for Furnishing Alcohol to Minors, Possession of Marijuana and Concealed Weapon

(Santa Maria) - Investigators from the California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) arrested three suspects on December 29, 2011 during an operation in Santa Maria. One was arrested for furnishing alcoholic beverages to a minor, one was cited for possession of less than one ounce of marijuana, and another was arrested for felony possession of a concealed billy club.

ABC Investigators conducted a program called a Decoy Shoulder Tap Operation which 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.

The program is intended to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. Statistics show they generally have a higher rate of drunken driving crashes than adults. Studies also show the combination of alcohol and youth tends to increase criminal conduct. According to the American Medical Association, underage drinking can increase chances of risky sexual behavior and teen pregnancy, juvenile delinquency, compromise health, and result in unintentional injury and death.

During the operation, seven adults were contacted by minor decoys and one agreed to illegally buy alcohol for the minor decoys.

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ABC is a Department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency.