



VALLEJO POLICE DEPARTMENT

Press Release

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Lieutenant Reginald Garcia

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO HELP IN ABC GRANT TO PREVENT SALES OF ALCOHOL TO MINORS

Sacramento – The California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control has kicked off a campaign to help local law enforcement agencies throughout the state in preventing the sale of alcohol to minors. The \$2 – million grant from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), administered through the Governor's Office of Traffic Safety, will strengthen ABC's Minor Decoy Program by giving 29 law enforcement agencies funding to target ABC license businesses that sell alcohol to minors.

The Vallejo Police department received a grant of \$20,000 from ABC and will conduct a minor decoy operation of off-sale alcohol outlets in the near future. Random outlets will be selected and a minor will be sent into the business to attempt to make an alcohol purchase. As many as 20 outlets may be visited in a single night. On previous operations, up to four businesses have been cited for illegally selling alcohol to minors. In addition to large fines from ABC, a business also faces the possibility of losing its license to sell alcohol. Today, thirty-two off-sales businesses were visited which resulted in no violations. Our goal is to obtain compliance from the businesses, which we attained during today's program.

Key to the program will be the participation of the Friday Night Live, a state-wide high school organization that deals with the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse on the peer level. Friday Night Live will offer student decoys, under the direct supervision of a law enforcement officer, to check on the compliance of liquor licensees in checking ID's and preventing the sale of alcohol to minors. Friday night Live will also help in the public media campaign to alert liquor licensees of the increased scrutiny by local law enforcement, and in educating your people about the penalties of trying to purchase, possess or consume alcoholic beverages.

Minors have a higher rate of fatal drunk driving crashes than the adult general population. According to the California Highway Patrol, 160 minors died in alcohol-related collision in 2002 (the latest year that figures are available).

ABC Director Jerry R. Jolly said, "It is such a tragedy when young people are able to illegally obtain alcohol that result in death or serious injury. Licensees who sell to minors are committing a crime against young people when they are not diligent in checking ID's."

The 29 law enforcement agencies (see attached list) will be working with Friday Night Live to identify those licensees who are not complying with the law.

In addition to the 29 Law enforcement agencies, ABC investigators at District Offices throughout the State will be conducting Minor Decoy Operations in those areas not covered by the grant program.

During the current year, minor decoy operations around the state resulted in a twenty-three percent violation, or more that two out of every ten liquor licensees checked sold to minors.

Said Jolly, "We expect this increase emphasis on checking liquor licensees for compliance will reduce even more the availability of alcohol to minors.