

RESULTS OF WEDNESDAY'S DECOY OPERATION TO REDUCE ALCOHOL SALES TO YOUTH:

**OF THE 112 STORES, RESTAURANTS, BARS AND TAVERNS VISITED
BY MULTNOMAH COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, 26
SOLD ALCOHOL TO MINORS, WHICH EQUATES TO 23%.**

Some fourteen teams of police officers, Oregon Liquor Control inspectors, and youth decoys participated in the operation coordinated by Oregon Partnership, the second such mission in the last five months.

Last July, a similar operation that targeted 141 businesses found that 38 sold alcohol to youths. That equated to a 28% illegal sale rate.

Compliance checks are a proven method to reduce sales of alcohol to underage drinkers. The underage decoys attempted to purchase alcoholic beverages as part of the operation.

Each team included two unmarked vehicles, police officers, OLCC inspectors and decoys. The decoys, 17-20 years old, were comprised of police cadets or college students in a criminal justice program.

While most businesses checked ID and refused to sell to the decoys, 26 ignored the valid identification and were cited.

People who sell alcohol to minors are charged by the police with misdemeanors and face the possibility of one year in jail and/or a \$6,250 fine. In addition, bartenders and business owners face additional penalties levied against their permits and licenses by the OLCC.

For example, someone with a liquor license could face a fine of \$1,650 or a ten-day suspension for a first offense.

“We experienced super cooperation among all the law enforcement agencies that took part and hope that the folks who sell alcohol got the message loud and clear,” said Pamela Erickson, deputy director of Oregon Partnership, a non-profit alcohol

and drug prevention organization that spearheaded the missions under a grant from the Oregon Department of Human Services. “The operation went very smoothly, and we thank everybody who worked hard to make it a success.”

Yesterday’s mission included the Portland Police Bureau, the Multnomah County Sheriff’s Office, the Gresham Police Department, the Fairview Police Department, the Troutdale Police Department and the OLCC.

Alcohol use is associated with the leading causes of death of young people. According to the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, underage drinking costs Oregonians \$697 million a year in medical costs, pain and suffering and work loss costs.

Youth who start drinking before the age of fifteen are four times as likely to become addicted as adults compared to those who wait until the age of twenty-one.

About Oregon Partnership:

Oregon Partnership is a statewide nonprofit that has worked to promote healthy kids and communities for well over a decade by raising awareness about drug and alcohol issues, providing prevention education in classrooms, and 24-hour crisis lines for people needing help. To learn more, visit www.orpartnership.org.