



CHICO POLICE DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

530-897-4900

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May 12, 2015
PR 15-04

Chico Police Runs Decoy Operation in Attempt to Reduce Underage Drinking

(Chico) - Chico Police Department officers have cited one individual for furnishing alcohol to a minor on May 12, 2015. The actions were the result of a Shoulder Tap Operation.

Officers 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, agents then arrest and cite them for furnishing alcohol to the minor. Two people were solicited in an attempt to purchase alcohol and 1 refused. The other person said she would consider it and then purchased the alcohol and provided it to the minor decoy without any exchange of money. The penalty for furnishing alcohol to a minor is a minimum \$1000 fine and 24 hours of community service.

The Department also conducted a Minor Decoy Operation which involves minors who work under the direct supervision of police officers or ABC agents. The minors attempted to purchase alcohol from seven retail licensees in the City of Chico. None of the licensed establishments sold alcohol to the Minor Decoy.

Anyone selling alcohol to the minor would 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 where alcohol was sold to a minor. That may include a fine, a suspension or the permanent revocation of the license.

ABC is conducting the compliance checks statewide 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.

Supervisor:

Watch Commander: Lt. Dave Britt

Prepared By: George Laver, Lieutenant- Ret.

Date/Time: May 12, 2015

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Minor Decoy operations have been conducted by local law enforcement throughout the state since the 1980's. When the program first began, the violation rate of retail establishments selling to minors was as high as 40 to 50 percent. When conducted on a routine basis, the rate has dropped in some cities as low as 10 percent or even below.

In 1994, the California Supreme Court ruled unanimously that use of underage decoys is a valid tool of law enforcement to ensure that licensees are complying with the law.

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) through the department's Grant Assistance Program. ABC is a Department of the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency.

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