



# NEWS RELEASE

HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF POLICE  
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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## **Police cite Elkridge liquor store for underage alcohol sale** *Six other businesses applauded for refusing to sell in undercover operation*

The Howard County Police Department recently conducted a test of liquor stores throughout the county that resulted in an Elkridge liquor store being cited for selling alcohol to an underage customer.

Harwood Convenience Shop, 6641 Washington Boulevard, sold an alcoholic beverage to a minor after asking for and checking the minor's identification which clearly showed he was under 21 years of age. The business has been notified that it will be brought before the Alcohol Beverage Hearing Board for a violation hearing.

As part of the test, an 18-year-old volunteer from HC DrugFree entered the establishments and attempted to purchase alcohol. The driver's license clearly showed the volunteer was less than 21 years of age.

Six other businesses fared well in the test, with employees following all appropriate laws. Clerks at those establishments reviewed the volunteer's driver's license and refused to complete the sale. Police Chief Gary Gardner is sending letters of appreciation to employees of:

- Meadowridge Wine & Spirits, Elkridge;
- Elkridge Discount Liquors;
- JP's Fine Wine & Spirits, Jessup;
- Jessup Discount Liquor;
- Koko's Mini Market, Columbia; and
- Richburn Discount Liquors, Columbia.

These letters commend the employees for their commitment to curbing underage drinking.

These periodic tests are part of an ongoing effort to combat underage drinking in Howard County. In addition to the recent test of liquor stores, the police department also conducted a "shoulder tap" operation aimed at deterring adults from furnishing alcohol to minors outside liquor stores.

It is a misdemeanor to furnish alcoholic beverages to minors. In this operation, an 18-year-old volunteer contacted adults coming in and out of a Columbia liquor store and asked if they would purchase alcohol for him. Two adults granted his request and received citations.

The police department continues to focus on reducing inappropriate use of alcohol and drunk driving, particularly among young people. The department also reminds parents and other adults that anyone hosting parties where alcohol is served to minors may face stiff penalties and criminal charges. Police encourage citizens who are aware of underage drinking or establishments that sell alcohol to minors to call 410-313-STOP.

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