

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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ABC Cites Two Individuals for Selling Alcohol to Minors

(Rancho Mirage)- Investigators of the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) along with a Deputy with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, Indio Station have cited two servers for selling alcohol to minors on December 11, 2008. The actions were the result of a minor decoy operation in which minors under the direct supervision of department investigators, attempted to purchase alcohol from seven retail licensees in the City of La Quinta, Coachella and the communities of Mecca and Thermal.

Those who sold to a minor decoy face a minimum fine of \$250, and/or 24 to 32 hours of community service for a first violation. In addition, ABC will pursue administrative action against the alcoholic beverage licenses of the businesses where the violations occurred. That may include a fine, a suspension of the license, or the permanent revocation of the license.

ABC is conducting the compliance checks state-wide to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors.

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 lower. 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 Office of Traffic Safety, through the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency.

ABC is a department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Dale E. Bonner, a member of the Governor's Cabinet.