



MEDIA RELEASE

Investigative Unit

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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OIU agents to parents and students: Be safe and smart this prom season.

(Columbus) – Prom season in Ohio is upon us and agents with the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Ohio Investigative Unit want parents and students to understand Ohio's alcohol laws. Agents hope parents and students make the decision not to participate in illegal and dangerous behavior, such as providing alcohol to minors and consuming underage.

"While we know alcohol consumption takes place before prom, most of the illegal activity happens after prom has concluded," said OIU Enforcement Commander Eric Wolf. "Either way, the excitement that comes along with prom can easily turn into a time of tragedy because of the increased occurrences of underage drinking at after prom parties. We urge parents not to provide a place or allow alcohol consumption to take place on your property."

To help foster good choices, parents and teens need to understand Ohio's underage drinking laws.

- It is illegal to provide a place for your child and his/her friends to drink in a "safe" environment. In fact, parents may not provide alcohol to children who are under 21, who are not their own, even in their own home with the other parents' permission. Those convicted of providing alcohol to a person under 21 years of age face maximum sentences of six months in jail and/or a \$1,000 fine.
- It is illegal to purchase alcohol for anyone under 21. Anyone who purchases, sells or gives alcoholic beverages to underage individuals faces a \$1,000 fine and/or up to six months in jail.
- If you are under 21 and are caught driving with a blood alcohol concentration of .02 percent or higher, a level that can be reached after just one or two drinks, you can be arrested. Punishment is suspension of your driver license for at least 90 days up to a maximum of two years, plus four points added to your driving record. Having an open container of alcohol in a motor vehicle is also illegal.

Together, we must commit to making a safer Ohio, by stopping senseless tragedies associated with irresponsible and illegal underage alcohol consumption. If you have information about a bar; store or carryout selling beer and/or liquor to persons under the age of 21; or you have information of an underage house party, please notify the Ohio Investigative Unit by calling the #677 on your cell phone and your complaint will be investigated.

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The Ohio Investigative Unit agents are plain-clothed fully sworn peace officers. OIU is charged with enforcing the state's liquor laws and is the only state law enforcement agency specifically tasked with investigating food stamp fraud crimes. Agents also investigate tobacco violations.

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