

Ohio Investigative Unit



MEDIA RELEASE



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OIU agents offer safety tips for students as they return to Ohio's colleges and universities

(Columbus, Ohio) - Agents with the Ohio State Highway Patrol's Ohio Investigative Unit (OIU) are asking Ohio parents remind their college students of the state's alcohol laws and general safety tips as they begin moving into their dorms and apartments over the next several weeks.

"For many students this is the first time away from home, so parents need to discuss with their students the importance of making good decisions," says OIU Commander Captain Gary Allen. "Parents and our agents have a common goal – let the students have fun, but safely and lawfully."

The legal drinking age in Ohio is 21 years old. If students are caught drinking, in possession of or sharing in the cost of alcoholic beverages; furnishing alcohol to anyone under 21; or using or in possession of fake identification each have criminal implications as well as possible sanctions by their college or university.

If students are hosting a party – they need to make sure anyone consuming or possessing alcohol is of legal age. At least one person should be sober to control access to the alcohol, making sure no one underage or visibly intoxicated is served, as well as preventing harm from happening to the guests – such as assaults.

Before friends leave their dorm or their apartments, OIU recommends they promise to stick together until they are home safe and to be on the lookout for drink tampering. Anyone who sees someone tampering with a drink should get that person out of the situation and contact authorities. Tips to protect yourself and your friends against drink tampering:

- Know that both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks can be drugged
- Drink from bottles or cans instead of glasses
- If you do turn your back on your drink, get a new one.

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The Ohio State Highway Patrol's 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. Follow OIU on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ohio-Investigative-Unit/165782203506269> and on Twitter by logging onto http://twitter.com/Ohio_OIU.