



MEDIA RELEASE

Investigative Unit

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John R. Kasich, Governor

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 12, 2015

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OIU asks liquor permits holders to be vigilant during St. Patrick's Day celebrations *Sports bars also need to be alert during March Madness*

(Columbus) – As Ohio liquor permit holders finalize plans for their annual St. Patrick's Day celebrations, agents with the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Ohio Investigative Unit, want patron safety to top the list.

Many patrons set out to consume green beer on St. Patrick's Day; however, liquor permit holders must put their safety first by not serving intoxicated individuals and discouraging excessive consumption of alcohol. It is illegal to serve, sell or furnish alcohol to someone who is intoxicated and anyone who has not turned 21.

"Yes, there is a component of personal responsibility; however liquor permit holders also have a responsibility to not serve anyone who is intoxicated," said Enforcement Commander Eric Wolf. "Patron safety should always be paramount in liquor permit establishments. Patron safety starts with vigilant staff."

Keeping patrons safe and ensuring they are not over-served, should not stop at St. Patrick's Day. College basketball fans will be crowding Ohio sports bars to watch hours of tournament action.

Some indicators we suggest bar staff use to determine whether someone has been over-served include:

- Is the individual able to stand and carry on a conversation without slurring words?
- Has the person ordered or been served multiple drinks within a small amount of time?
- Has the person become irritable and begun causing problems?
- Is the person having difficulty drinking beverages, resulting in spillage?

Any liquor permit staff found to be in violation of serving intoxicated or underage individuals can be charged criminally. In addition, agents may administratively cite the liquor permit. The administrative case will be presented to the Ohio Liquor Control Commission for their consideration. Possible administrative penalties include fines, suspension or revocation of the liquor permit.

To report selling alcohol to an intoxicated or underage person, call #677.

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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. 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.