

# PRESS RELEASE

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **MULTIPLE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES CONDUCT ALCOHOL COMPLIANCE CHECKS**

On Friday, May 6 and Saturday May 7, 2011 the Latah County Sheriff's Office, Moscow Police Department and Idaho State Police Alcohol Beverage Control conducted alcohol vendor compliance checks in Latah County. These checks are a standard way of verifying that alcohol vendors remain in compliance with ordinances and laws governing their license.

Officers involved received four hours and minors received two hours of training from Detective Tim Davidson of the Idaho State Patrol Alcohol Beverage Control prior to conducting compliance checks throughout Latah County and the City of Moscow. According to records from the Alcohol Beverage Control, there are 86 licensed establishments in Latah County. Of these, 70 establishments were checked and 13 were cited for violations of Idaho Code 23-603 "Dispensing to a person under the age of twenty-one years."

Prior to these checks the Moscow Police Department and Idaho State Patrol Alcohol Beverage Control hosted a Responsible Beverage Server Training for any interested alcohol licensed parties on April 21, 2011. Moscow Police Crime Prevention Officer, Jesse Applehans personally invited all alcohol vendors located within the city of Moscow by distributing flyers and invitations to the training. Latah County Sheriff's Office deputies also personally distributed flyers and invitations to all establishments within Latah County for this training and the Latah County Youth Advocacy sent letters to all of these businesses explaining of upcoming enforcement activities and invitation to the training. Of the 86 licensed establishments, 32 attended the training, and 7 of these were cited for liquor violations.

"In the past several years Latah County has been impacted by several under-age fatality injuries where alcohol has been cited as the cause," said Gail Silkwood, Latah County Youth Advocacy Council Prevention Coordinator, "while not everyone will get hurt, isn't one enough? We would like to see Latah County be the first county in our state to have all establishments successfully pass these checks." The Latah County Youth Advocacy is funded by a five year federal grant from the Substance Use and Mental Health Services Administration which provided the funding for these compliance checks.

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Officers from the Latah County Sheriff's Office and Moscow Police Department worked together to provide security for the minors who were involved with these checks. Idaho Code 23-804 provides for law enforcement agencies to pay minors as undercover agents in order to enforce alcohol laws. For these checks, all minors were ages 18 – 19 years old, did not have any previous alcohol offenses, used their true identification cards when asked for identification and were instructed to be themselves during the checks. They were not allowed to distract, lie or cheat in anyway to procure the alcohol. They were supervised at all times by one or more undercover officers from one of the agencies, who also verified that the beverage served to the minor was indeed an alcoholic beverage.

For establishments that have successfully passed their compliance check, the Latah County Youth Advocacy Council will be issuing certificates of success as a thank you for keeping our kids safe in Latah County.

Idaho State Police Detective Tim Davidson of the Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) remarked "When retailers are trying to be safe and keep alcohol out of the hands of minors it's obvious. The safe retailers stand out and the rest of the community knows it. I'm in the business of making safe communities so it's refreshing to see so many in compliance."

The Latah County Sheriff's Office and Moscow Police Department plan to continue conducting compliance checks as well as working with ABC to conduct other enforcement strategies in the future.

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