

Mansfield area businesses cited in compliance checks

Employees at 15 businesses throughout Richland County were issued citations for selling alcohol or tobacco to minors Wednesday as the result of a multi-agency compliance investigation.

METRICH detectives, deputies from the Richland County Sheriff's Office and staff members from the Community Action for Capable Youth spent about four hours Wednesday evening checking businesses for tobacco and alcohol sales compliance.

People under the age of 21 were taken to 87 businesses in Richland County where they attempted to purchase alcohol or tobacco products.

Four employees sold tobacco products and 11 employees sold some type of alcoholic beverage to underage customers. A total of 15 people were issued citations for the offenses.

"The local Chiefs Association appreciates those business that maintain a strict compliance by assuring alcohol and tobacco stays out of the hands of our youth," METRICH Project Director Ken Coontz said.

Teens and young adults attempted to purchase a variety of alcoholic beverages, including Mike's Hard Lemonade and Four Loko malt liquor.

The 11 businesses cited for alcohol violations are mostly in Mansfield. They include: Interstate Marathon, 495 Woodville Road; Marion Avenue Drive Thru, 289 Marion Ave.; Circle K, 98 Lexington Ave.; Park Ave. Drive Thru, 295 Park Avenue West; Mansfield Beer Dock, 753 Springmill St.; Papa Johnny's Drive Thru, 702 Bowman St.; In & Out Mart, 300 N. Mulberry St.; Galloping Goose, 504 W. Fourth St.; Puffs, 950 Ashland Rd.; Circle K, 2094 Park Avenue West; and Cornell's Grocery, 147 Mansfield Ave., Shelby.

Four businesses sold cigarettes to underage persons: Rite Aid, 1075 Ashland Road; Shonnies Mini Mart, 773 Laver Road; Dollar General Store, 458 Springmill St. and Geyers Market, 280 E. Main St., Lexington.

Officers have the option of arresting or citing employees based on the severity of the violation. Coontz said all employees were issued citations, which requires them to appear in court.

Businesses found to be out of compliance will have a hearing with the state liquor agency where they may face a fine or a revocation of their liquor license.

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