

**ABSTRACT**

The Michigan State University and the City of East Lansing community experiences a large number of alcohol related problems. This problem was not only identified by listening to the complaints from the community and liquor retailers but by examining our police records and noticing the correlation between calls for service and alcohol involvement. Many of these alcohol related incidents also involved minors, persons under the age of twenty-one. This problem has been an ongoing situation for years and had been escalating due to reactive responses as opposed to a proactive approach.

An original approach was taken to combat these conditions. Community Policing is the base of the approach. Utilizing the Community Policing philosophy, education and enforcement can be easily dispersed among all members of the community. In order to cross police jurisdictions, a Community Police Team was formed consisting of an officer from each agency. Together, this team would be able to meet the needs of the community and combat the ongoing alcohol problem.

The Michigan State University/East Lansing Community Police Team has implemented a number of programs to educate the community on alcohol related laws. The team created or utilized programs such as "Alcohol Training Seminars for Liquor Establishments," "Keg Tracking," "SPOTLIGHT," "Party Forms" and "Pre-party Evaluations," and "Decoy/Sting Operations." The team then enforced the laws and ordinances pertaining to alcohol sale and use. Since the team was a consistent presence

for the community, they ended up building partnerships and began seeing an impact on alcohol related incidents.

Although successful with many of their programs, the team has experienced a few failures in their efforts. The team always rebounds from their failed attempts and as a result has leaped past their previous efforts. In one such case of failure, the team now has the backing of a Michigan Senator in order to pass a state-wide law which would overcome the team's defeat.

Overall, the team has reduced alcohol related incidents, especially in the area of minors, and has built a long needed relationship with the community and the liquor establishments. Their success can be measured qualitative, by the responses received from the alcohol retailers, the citizens of East Lansing, and the students of Michigan State University, as well as quantitative, by data statistical reports obtained from computerized incident tracking, call dispatching, and record management.

The City of East Lansing is the second largest city in Ingham County with a population of 51,065. This ranks East Lansing, as the 25<sup>th</sup> largest city in the state of Michigan. East Lansing is also the home of Michigan State University. Census information indicates that 30% of the city's residents are under the legal drinking age. This percentage increases during the normal Michigan State University school year.

East Lansing is a highly motivated residential city with a growing downtown area. 179 different businesses total up 678,000 square footage of the city. Over 25,000 residents of East Lansing live within a 10 minute walk of the downtown area. The city is surrounded by several large cities such as Flint, Grand Rapids, Battle Creek, and the capitol city of Lansing.

Michigan State University, the nation's first land grant college, is located in East Lansing. This Big 10 university enrolls over 47,000 students and employs over 12,000 citizens. Spartan football, basketball, hockey, the MSU Museum, the Kresge art museum, the Breslin student event center, and Broadway attractions presented at the Wharton Center have attracted more than two million people to the campus in one year.

In 1995, the Michigan State University Police and the East Lansing Police responded to a combined number of 18,175 calls for service. A large number of the complaints were alcohol related. Despite the best efforts of both police departments to enforce liquor violations and public order crimes the problem was continuing to increase.

The Michigan State University Police Department and the City of East Lansing Police Department chiefs jointly determined the need to combine forces in an attempt to control various problems encountered with alcohol and minors. Each department has dedicated one community police officer to work as a team. This team is responsible for

developing a solid working relationship with the forty-three liquor establishments located in the City of East Lansing. Together, they have built trusting relationships with the owners and employees of the local liquor establishments. During alcohol training seminars given by the community policing team, they discuss and implement programs to stop the problems concerning alcohol and minors. By empowering the liquor establishments, the team has given the community a chance to take control of a serious problem.

Through brainstorming and statistical analysis, the team researched and found possible solutions to the alcohol problems. The following highlighted programs, developed by the team, include "Alcohol Training Seminars for liquor establishments," "Keg Tracking," "SPOTLIGHT," "Party Forms" and "Pre-party Evaluations," and "Decoy/Sting Operations." Each of which have made a positive effect on the community.

### **ALCOHOL TRAINING SEMINARS FOR LIQUOR ESTABLISHMENTS**

*Problem Identification:* Each of the forty-three liquor retailing businesses made it clear that they needed to train their employees in a consistent, law oriented, manner. The team also agreed with this problem, and had already begun a plan to inform establishments about liquor laws.

*Response:* To begin, the Community Police Team sent out letters and held its first liquor establishment meeting on March 30, 1996. There was a 100% turnout and both the police and owners/managers expressed their concerns about minors attempting to purchase alcohol, inability of employees to screen for false identification, and common liquor law violations. The team put together the first alcohol training seminar for all East

Lansing liquor establishments. They covered issues regarding current fake ID's, entrance of a person under the age of 21, and continued service to intoxicated persons who may end up injuring themselves or others.

*Result:* This program has become so popular that other liquor establishments in other jurisdictions have requested the team's assistance. The team is invited into every liquor establishment at least four times a year to give this very popular class to new employees and it serves as a refresher course for their long term employees. In addition to the seminars, quarterly meetings have continued with all liquor establishments in the City of East Lansing.

The MSU/East Lansing Community Police Team is helping to reduce alcohol abuse and alcohol related crime in and around liquor establishments. Since the police and the liquor establishments have been working together, the focus is no longer on the them, the focus is now on the people who are violating the law to get into the liquor establishments. The team has increased enforcement efforts focusing on the offenses of "Presenting a fake I.D. to a liquor establishment," "Presenting a fake I.D. to a police officer," and "Possession of alcohol by a minor." Now, with the early detection of false I.D.'s, minors are being arrested at the door for one or more of these offenses. This results in fines up to \$1200 and three misdemeanor offenses. They will also spend time in jail until there is no alcohol found in their blood stream.

Over the last twelve month period, police have not issued any liquor law violations to the liquor establishments in the City of East Lansing. There has also been a decrease in fist fights, vandalism, and minors attempting entry into the bars. Before the team tackled this problem, liquor establishments were cited 20-25 times within a year. This is a direct

result of the officers proactive approach. Concerns on both sides of the table are being discussed with a plan of action and evaluated.

As a result of these efforts, problems which were related to the liquor establishments in the past have now been displaced into the East Lansing neighborhoods. Due to the crime displacement, the team has implemented a number of preventative measures aimed at alcohol problems within the neighborhoods. These measures will be discussed throughout this entry.

### **KEG TRACKING**

*Problem Identification:* Often college students hold very large house parties at their off-campus residence. These parties are referred to as "Blind Pigs" since the party organizers charge money for entrance to the party and they are serving alcohol without a liquor license. In addition, the party organizers also do not make an attempt to check to see if the party attendants are under twenty-one resulting in minors possessing alcohol. When police responded to complaints about these parties they found intoxicated minors involved in an array of drunk and disorderly offenses and other public nuisance crimes. No one would take responsibility for the keg nor did the police departments have the manpower to investigate it further. The police practice was to arrest who they could and confiscate the keg without anyone formally charged for providing alcohol to the minors.

*Response:* The team needed a way to identify the adult(s) responsible for alcohol violations. The Keg Tracking system was developed to identify adults providing alcohol to minors from kegs at large college parties or blind pigs. The process of Keg Tracking starts when a keg is purchased at a store involved in the tracking program. The customer

must fill out a pre-numbered form in which the store retains a copy and the customer gets a copy. The form number is associated to a numbered plastic tag which is affixed to the keg after the form is filled out. The overall concept was to have a way to trace a keg back to a responsible person. The form information would provide their name, address, telephone number, and other pertinent information. In order to keep the tags on the keg, the form had to be properly worded.

The form stated the following to the customer:

- They will not furnish any of the kegs content to a minor.
- It is illegal, if you are 21 years of age or older, to purchase any alcoholic beverage for any person under the age of 21. Fines and imprisonment may be imposed by the courts.
- In addition to criminal penalties, they are also advised they may be exposed to civil liability for providing alcohol to an underage person.
- Willfully destroying, damaging, defacing, removing, or meddling of the Michigan State University Police Department-East Lansing Police Department property tag is a misdemeanor. Persons removing the tag are subject to 90 days in jail and/or a \$500 fine.

Since the team established a trusting relationship with the liquor establishments through the Alcohol Seminars, the owners were willing to take on this new Keg Tracking System.

*Results:* The number of problem keg parties within a 2 week period decreased. Feedback from the liquor establishments and decreased calls for service to out of control parties illustrated a change from common source drinking to cans or bottles. Students admitted they are less likely to give or sell cans of beer to minors at parties in contrast to serving from a common source.

Within this 2 week period, a minor who had been drinking from a keg at a party fell from the balcony and died. The police were able to use the Keg Tracking system to locate the person responsible for purchasing the keg. Prior to this program, the Police may not have ever located the individual responsible for purchasing the keg which resulted

in this tragic event. The liquor establishments felt the importance and need of the Keg Tracking system, however by participating in it they were unable to compete with others in the adjacent cities and lost sales (one store lost \$17,000 in sales in 2 weeks). One establishment in the City of Lansing advertised in the student newspaper that they had cheap beer, no keg tracking system, and they delivered in the City of East Lansing. After looking at the loss of sales and the competitive edge others had when they did not have the Keg Tracking system, we collectively decided to discontinue the system. This failure could not be a reason to give up. The team knew this program could be a success with the backing from State Legislation. The team then initiated contact with Senator Dianne Byrum to find out the possibilities of having such a program throughout the State of Michigan.

*Status of proposed beer keg registration legislation. Senate Bill #1182 "Michigan Liquor Control Code of 1998 ":* Dianne Byrum, Michigan Democratic State Senator proposed this legislation which would leave all liquor establishments in the State of Michigan no choice but to participate in a Keg Registration. This will eliminate the ability of individuals to elude the Keg Tracking system. This piece of legislation would also protect the liquor establishments from losing sales to other non-participating cities in the area. Senator Byrum has recently advised our department that this important legislation has been introduced to the Michigan State Senate. When the Senate reconvenes in the Fall, hearings will begin. The team has great hopes that there local failure will turn into a state-wide success.

## SPOTLIGHT

*Problem Identification:* Even after "Alcohol Training Seminars for Liquor Establishments," the team still noticed a problem with minors attempting to purchase alcohol using fake identification. The team also encountered a number of adults procuring alcohol for minors inside and in proximity of alcohol establishments.

*Response:* The team needed to initiate an alcohol education and enforcement advancement. A program previously called Cops in Shops has been redeveloped in the State of Michigan and renamed "SPOTLIGHT." SPOTLIGHT is a cooperative effort between retailers and law enforcement which thoroughly educates minors and retailers and provides a unique enforcement method. SPOTLIGHT is an effective, turnkey program that was activated in East Lansing with the aid of grant funding.

The team was involved by taking on the role of educators in the community. The first step was to educate the liquor retailers in the community about the responsible sale of alcohol. They informed them of the laws and ordinances as well as tips and tricks to avoid illegal alcohol purchase attempts. The unique alcohol enforcement procedure was to have undercover officers randomly placed within participating retail stores to deter the illegal purchases. Undercover officers were also positioned outside of the establishments to deter individuals from purchasing alcohol for minors.

The retailers participated by holding classroom style seminars where their employees can learn about alcohol issues. They also prominently displayed warning signs,

for an indefinite period, about the undercover officers that may be in the store in order to maximize the preventative value of SPOTLIGHT.

*Results:* There were many ways, both quantitative and qualitative, to gauge this program's success. Certainly, a reduction in attempts by minors to purchase alcohol and a number of citations issued are two accurate and important measures. There were a lot of other important less measurable benefits as well. The team brought a collective effort to focus attention on those who were trying to break the law. A more lasting and vital benefit came from the increased community awareness of the problem of underage alcohol abuse and a new understanding that something can and will be done about it.

The team did encounter certain problems within the program's results. Minors attending large house parties have increased due to the fact that it is difficult to use fake I.D.'s to gain access into the bars and other liquor establishments. The increased enforcement in and around the liquor establishments and house parties resulted in a court system overload. In response to these problems, the team then met with court officials and explained their goals and efforts to instill paranoia in adults and minors to reduce the number of alcohol related incidents and accidents caused by the abuse of alcohol. Overall, the success of this program has counteracted the problems created by it.

## **PARTY FORMS AND PRE-PARTY EVALUATIONS**

*Problem Identification:* There was a lack of accountability for those hosting the out of control parties. For example: a fraternity house held a party with approximately 2500 people and 8 kegs. When the police arrived on a noise and unlawful party complaint, officers were unable to identify anybody who lived there at the time of the call.

*Response:* The team along with cooperating fraternities and sororities worked together to create a party information form which is used as a contact reference for the persons hosting the party. After the form is completed, the team will contact the individual identified on the form to arrange for a pre-party evaluation.

A pre-party evaluation consists of: a walk-through of the residence to check for unattended doors and open windows that unwanted guests could enter through, explain the laws and individual responsibilities to the host, and ask them to advise their neighbors they are having a party so contact the host before calling the police. As a result of the team using this party information form, there have been no calls for service in response to complaints to those residents using the form.

A Party Smart, Safe, and Legal brochure was created to be distributed to all of the residents in the City of East Lansing. The brochure provides a list of frequently used phone numbers and guidelines for parties and special events. It explains the State Laws and City Ordinances on various Alcohol related offenses including Disorderly Conduct, and Noise. The only problems the team has encountered with this initiative is the fact that

houses cannot be forced to participate. The participation in this effort is on a volunteer basis only. Everyone hosting a house party has not welcomed this initiative.

### STING AND DECOY OPERATIONS

*Problem Identification:* Prior to the Community Policing Team initiatives, minors were attempting and in numerous cases succeeding in purchasing alcohol from liquor establishments. The liquor establishments are aware through the alcohol seminars that a sting and decoy operation will follow to serve as a check and balance. This also enables the team to identify specific problems that may need different or additional education including self enforcement.

*Response:* The team conducts a 3 day sting operation using 2 minors as decoys to examine if local establishments are doing their jobs to make sure minors are not served alcohol. During operations, employees who fail to properly check I.D.'s are being issued a misdemeanor citation for "Contributing to a minor." This offense has a penalty of up to 1 year in jail and/or \$1,000 fine. In addition to the employee being cited, the liquor establishment is cited for "Failure to make diligent inquiry." The penalties range from a monetary fine to revocation of their liquor license.

*Results:* Since the beginning of sting and decoy operations, liquor establishments have been cracking down and doing a much better job detecting fake I.D.'s. For example, last year doorman checking I.D.'s confiscated over 300 fake I.D.'s. Prior to the team's efforts and relationships with the liquor establishments a good portion of these minors would have been admitted and allowed to consume alcohol.

The owners and managers of the liquor establishments requested that the police charge the individual responsible for serving the minor. This way, not only is the employee going to be fired they will also be charged with a criminal offense. Without the liquor establishment/team meetings, the police would not have been aware of this specific concern.

Liquor establishments have expressed with this proactive approach they now realize that when they are cited for liquor violations, it is now warranted. In the past, they felt as if they were picked on (us vs. them).

### FINAL ASSESSMENT

The MSU/East Lansing Community Police Team is helping to reduce alcohol abuse and alcohol related crime in and around the community surrounding Michigan State University. These officers have developed a rapport and a strong working relationship with bars, party stores, fraternities and sororities, and other student groups living on and off campus. Over the last two years, the team has implemented some very strong and proactive measures to curb underage drinking as well as fights, vandalism, and other crime that is often fueled by alcohol.



East Lansing Police  
Officer Dan DeKorte

The Alcohol Community Police Office

Michigan State University Police  
Officer Bob Stanberry



# KEG TRACKING FORM

*It is illegal, if you are twenty-one years of age or older, to purchase any alcoholic beverage for any person under the age of twenty-one. Fines and/or imprisonment may be imposed by the courts for violations of these provisions.*

*If you are twenty-one years of age or older and are found to have furnished alcohol to a minor, you will be fined \$1,000 and face up to 60 days in jail [MCL 436.33(1)].*

*A person less than twenty-one years of age who uses fraudulent identification to purchase alcoholic liquor is guilty of a misdemeanor [MCL 436.33b].*

*You may also be exposed to Civil Liability for providing alcohol to an underage person.*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ DRIVER'S LICENSE #: \_\_\_\_\_

PUMP/TAP #: \_\_\_\_\_ KEG SEAL #: \_\_\_\_\_

BEER BRAND/SIZE: \_\_\_\_\_ DEPOSIT: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

STORE NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CLERK: \_\_\_\_\_

Deposits on kegs or taps do not constitute purchase of these items. The renter will be held responsible for damage to the equipment. Deposits may be withheld for damaged or missing parts. **Damage or removal of seal, or failure to return rented equipment to the store of purchase within \_\_\_\_\_ days will result in prosecution by law enforcement authorities.**

I have read and understand the above statements and agree to return all rented equipment timely and undamaged and with the keg tag undisturbed, attached, and undamaged. I further agree that I will not allow this alcoholic beverage to be provided to persons under the age of twenty-one years old.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_



East Lansing Police  
Officer Dan DeKorte

*The Alcohol Community Police Office*

Michigan State University Police  
Officer Bob Stanberry



## PARTY INFORMATION FORM

This form is to be returned to the Community Activities Bureau with comments from the Officer who had contact and/or answered calls regarding this party.

1. DATE AND TIME OF PARTY: \_\_\_\_\_
2. LOCATION OF PARTY: \_\_\_\_\_
3. LIST TWO (2) PEOPLE IN CHARGE OF THE PARTY WHO WILL HAVE SUPERINTENDING CONTROL OF THE PREMISES:  
 A: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ~RELATION TO ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_  
 B: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 ~RELATION TO ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_
4. NAME OF ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_
5. NAME OF ANY BAND, DJ, ETC: \_\_\_\_\_
6. ESTIMATED SIZE OF PARTY: \_\_\_\_\_
7. DATE/TIME NEIGHBORS NOTIFIED: \_\_\_\_\_
8. LIST OTHER RESTRICTIONS (FENCING, GUEST LIST, ETC.): \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
9. NAME/ADDRESS OF ANY SECURITY FIRM: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
10. INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY: \_\_\_\_\_
11. ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_
12. POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
13. DATE/TIME RECIEVED: \_\_\_\_\_

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT THE ALCOHOL COMMUNITY POLICE OFFICE AT 432-4999.**

## FALSE IDENTIFICATION PRESENTATION

1. Examples of fake ID's currently in use.
2. False ID to a liquor establishment = Disorderly conduct with a maximum fine of \$500.
3. MiP = Misdemeanor with the person being arrested, fine of \$100, court cost of \$50. Total \$150.
4. False ID to a police officer = Disorderly conduct with a maximum fine of \$500.
5. Items to look for in false ID's:
  - a) Expiration date
  - b) Glue lines or bumpy surface by the picture
  - c) Licenses that have the corner cut or punched
  - d) Consistency of the typeface used for name and birthday
  - e) Someone else using the ID, make sure the person in front of you is the same person in the picture.
  - f) Out of state ID cards should always be checked using the ID manual.
  - g) Out of state licenses should be checked with other ID. Also look at the license carefully since the other ID with just a name does not make a person 21 years old.
6. Intoxicated subjects on premises or serving to intoxicated persons can result in a liquor law violation.
7. Civil liability: Serving a person under the age of 21 or continued service to intoxicated persons who end up injuring themselves or others.
8. Liquor law violation: Serving a minor with no ID check being made or allowing a minor to consume knowing the person is under 21 = Fine of \$1000.  
-> Usually the employee loses their job by the time the case goes to the liquor control commission.
9. Usually if the person is in the place drinking for more than 2 1/4 hours, the person should be looked at very carefully. The person is going to show visible signs of intoxication. If the person has also been doing shots of alcohol it may be time to cut them off. If the person consumes 6 beers in 2 hours they will be close to the legal limit of being drunk. (Other factors are involved in this estimate.)