



MEDIA RELEASE

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
Sheriff-Coroner

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Sheriff's Office Cited One Retailer During Alcohol and Tobacco Sting

One employee at an Aptos alcohol and tobacco retail store was cited by the Sheriff's Office during a sting operation after they sold alcohol and cigarettes to a minor decoy.

On the evening of March 25th, 2019 members of the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office Alcohol and Tobacco Compliance Unit attempted to purchase tobacco products and alcoholic beverages at off-sale retail establishments in Santa Cruz County using an undercover minor. The goal of this operation was to limit minors' access in the community to alcoholic beverages and tobacco products and to confirm that the local businesses are doing their part to prevent access.

Minor decoys are under 21 years of age and are under the direct supervision of the compliance Deputies during the operation. The decoy must answer truthfully about their age and present their true identification upon request by a clerk. During this operation, the minor attempted to purchase tobacco products and alcoholic beverages from eleven locations throughout Santa Cruz County.

Cashiers at the following businesses turned the minor decoy away without selling any products:

- Aptos Natural Foods (Off Sale)– No Sale
- Deluxe Foods Aptos (Off Sale) – No Sale
- Rite -Aid Aptos (Off Sale) – No Sale
- Rio Liquors & Market Aptos (Off Sale) – No Sale
- Safeway Aptos (Off Sale) – No Sale
- Safeway Fuel Store Aptos (Off Sale) - No Sale
- Seascape Foods Aptos (Off Sale) – No Sale
- Deer Park Wine & Spirits Aptos (Off Sale) – No Sale
- Pajaro Valley Chevron Inc. Watsonville (Off Sale) – No Sale

- El Patio Grocery Aptos (Off Sale) – No Sale

The following alcohol retail store sold alcohol and tobacco products to the minor decoy:

- Aptos Village Liquor (Off Sale)– Sold alcohol and tobacco (Sheriff's Office case# 19-2592)

The Clerk at this location was issued a misdemeanor citation for selling alcohol and tobacco products to a minor and can also face administrative penalties by having their alcohol and tobacco sales licenses suspended or revoked.

In an ongoing effort to prevent access to certain products by minors, the Alcohol and Tobacco Compliance Unit will continue to conduct periodic undercover buy operations at on and off sale establishments in the unincorporated areas of Santa Cruz County.

PREPARED BY:

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