

## Q & A with Anthony Piercy, MO State Highway Patrol

**CLEAR Q:** What do you see as one of the major challenges facing retailers in decreasing the possibility of selling alcohol to minors?

**Officer Piercy:** I think most of the retailers in our area probably do a good job as far as checking ID cards and questioning individuals purchasing alcoholic beverages who look under age. I think the focus should be on the individuals who are of legal age who agree to purchase the alcoholic beverages for the underage drinkers. I think most drinkers are partial to specific brands when making purchases. Example: Someone may prefer Bud Light beer over Coors beer or maybe they prefer a specific brand of wine coolers or whiskey. When having someone else make their purchases for them, I am sure they are making specific orders. We all know it is no fun to drink alone and the people making the purchase are usually receiving orders from several different underage drinkers. Retailers should watch for the individuals who come into their business and purchase for example, a twelve pack of Busch Beer, a six pack of Bud Light Beers, and Wine Coolers. People purchasing multiple brands fit the profile of someone who may be purchasing for the underage drinker. The people who typically purchase intoxicants for the underage drinkers are usually young adults themselves who still socialize with people who are under the legal drinking age.

Back to the original question, retailers should take the time to become familiar with the different types of ID that could be presented and some of the new security features put into ID Cards that could help a person identify a fake ID Card.

**CLEAR Q :** What tips do you have for retailers for safe and responsible beverage sales?

**Officer Piercy:** Trust your feelings. If something doesn't seem right, it probably isn't. Take the time to question people making suspicious purchases, question people about the information on their ID Cards, and make sure they have an ID Card. Retailers should be educated about the civil liability that is placed upon them when they sell these beverages. If something was to happen where they sold to minors or to subjects supplying their product to minors, they could be liable both in criminal and civil court. I know when I worked fatal car crashes and accidents involving underage drinkers. I always looked for the evidence at the scenes, looking for receipts to see where the alcohol was purchased. Most of time I was able to find the information through physical evidence in the vehicle or through statements from people involved. Retailers should be aware that the underage drinkers may tell them they would not tell where they got the alcohol if they were caught. The truth is many will sing like a canary over the simple fact they may lose their driver's license. The retailer needs to know these people will talk after they speak to their attorneys and find out they stand to gain a lot of money in a civil law suit against the establishments who supplied or sold the alcoholic beverages to the underage drinkers.

**Clear Q:** What additional strategies can a community coalition like CLEAR do to further support retailers?

**Officer Piercy:** Utilize team work. Don't make the effort a CLEAR vs. the Retailers environment. Education in the area of what to look for when identifying fake ID cards. Community support for the retailers who do the right thing and community recognition for the retailers who become involved in the cause.

Want to know more? Need additional information about CLEAR or RBS? Want to participate?

- Contact CLEAR at 573-789-5509 or by e-mail at [chapman1@vpclinks.com](mailto:chapman1@vpclinks.com)
- Contact the grant coordinator, Donna Chapman, at 573.789.5509 or CLEAR officers: Thomas Wright, pres.; Sunday Unger, secretary; Karen Dobbins, treasurer.
- Check out our website at [morgancountyclear.org](http://morgancountyclear.org)
- Participate in one of the meetings and trainings listed on the dates to remember or on the SMART website: <http://smart.missouri.edu>