

Undercover tactics irk store owners

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were upset," Murphy said, following Friday night's undercover operation. "They were given warning."

for violating state liquor laws and city ordinances prohibiting sale of liquor to people younger than 21. Those who were ticketed will be reported to the state Liquor Control Commission, which has authority to

levy penalties and suspend or revoke liquor licenses.

Violating city ordinances is a simple misdemeanor carrying a maximum penalty of 90 days in jail and a \$500 fine upon conviction.

Violators of state liquor laws have the option of pleading guilty and paying a fine to the Liquor Control Commission through the mail or requesting a hearing. State fines range from \$100-\$500.

Compared to the 50 licensed establishments ticketed in late 1986, the 12 cited this time represents an improvement as far as police are concerned.

"I think it's great. I think we are pretty much accomplishing what we wanted to — stopping kids who want to buy. They (licensees) are being much more cautious," Murphy said. But licensees are still mad.

"We are very, very careful. I've been checking every customer. That guy (police cadet) looked like he was over 25 years old," a licensee said.

The manager of Smith-Rexall Drugs, 27702 Eight Mile, said she also has complaints about the police crackdown but would not elaborate and asked not to be identified.

THE OWNER of BJ's Party Store maintains that he regularly checks customers for identification.

"It's a trap to send someone in who looks older. This is ignorant and stupid."

"Once in a great while, we don't mind it (police checks). It's for the benefit of all. For Farmington Hills to trap people like that who are paying taxes every day of the year, what the hell are they trying to do?"

Though the BJ's owner would not elaborate, he said party store owners "are going to do something about it."

Despite the licensees' complaints, police maintain that all store owners must do is check identification, regardless of how old a person appears.

"If they are not sure, they shouldn't sell," Murphy said in early June.

State law also requires that any-

one selling liquor must be 18 years of age. Employees who sell liquor to minors are as liable as licensees.

Use of undercover personnel in liquor law crackdowns is sanctioned by the Liquor Control Commission and used extensively across the state, according to commission officials.

Police plan to continue liquor law crackdowns throughout the summer in efforts to curtail teenage drinking.

Cited stores listed

By Joanna Maliszowski
staff writer

Six of the 12 Farmington Hills liquor-licensed establishments ticketed in the latest police crackdown on liquor laws were cited previously.

The six were ticketed during the police department's major crackdown in late 1986 when 50 licensees were charged under both state law and city ordinance for sales to minors.

The latest crackdown targeted 34 packaged liquor stores, including drug, grocery, convenience and party stores, said Lt. Richard Murphy of the Farmington Hills Police Department.

The six establishments ticketed Friday night as well as in late 1986 are:

- K mart, 30800 Orchard Lake.
- Smith Rexall Drugs, 27702 Eight Mile.
- Andy's Country Market, 22595 Middlebelt.
- BJ's Party Store, 28728 Grand River.
- Farmington Party Store, 39450 10 Mile. A new owner holds this license. The former owner was ticketed in late 1986.

• 7-Eleven, 29375 10 Mile.

THE OTHER six establishments ticketed in the crackdown last week are:

- 7-Eleven, 29318 Orchard Lake.
- Great Scott's, 29555 Orchard Lake.
- Mike & Sons Party Store, 31511 13 Mile.
- Farmington Hills Market, 24233 Orchard Lake.
- Grape Vine, 29970 12 Mile.
- Party Plus Party Store, 28857 Orchard Lake.

Of the 50 ticketed in last year's crackdown, 30 licensees appeared before the state Liquor Control Commission and were found guilty of selling to minors as of early June, Murphy said.

One licensee was issued a warning letter. Another transferred the liquor license. Eighteen are still awaiting hearings. Also as of early June, 49 appearance tickets were issued to licensees charged with violating city ordinance.

Of the total cited in late 1986, 29 were found or pleaded guilty. Tickets against 14 licensees were taken under advisement, two were dismissed and four are still pending, Murphy said.

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