

# PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **“Underage Alcohol and Tobacco Sales Compliance Operation” Richland County, April 22, 2009**

On Wednesday, April 22, 2009, Investigators from METRICH Enforcement Unit, Mansfield Police Department Neighborhood Impact Section and staff members from CACY (Community Action for Capable Youth) conducted an Underage Alcohol and Tobacco Sales Compliance Operation. During the operation, Mansfield Police Explorers enlisted the assistance of a number of young people under the age of 21 years old. These young people were taken by investigators to various liquor permit and retail locations throughout Mansfield and Richland County in an attempt to purchase alcoholic beverages and tobacco products. Alcoholic beverages if sold to persons under the age of 21 years old and tobacco products if sold to persons under the age of 18 years old, are violations of the Ohio Revised Code. In all, sixty-six (66) retail locations were checked. Employees at nine (9) or 13.6% of those locations sold some type of alcoholic beverage or tobacco product to one of the underage persons. Each employee that sold an alcoholic beverage or tobacco product to one of the underage persons was cited for the violation and will be required to appear in either the Mansfield or Shelby Municipal Court at a later date. Each alcohol related case will be presented to the Ohio Investigative Unit for potential citations of the Liquor Permit Holder at each location.

We would remind all owners and employees of retail locations with liquor permits that Ohio Law forbids the sale of any alcoholic beverage to any person under the age of 21 years old. Tobacco sales are prohibited to persons under the age of 18 years old. Unannounced compliance checks will continue to be conducted in the future to insure strict compliance to the Law.

METRICH is a ten county decentralized task force in North Central Ohio whose mission is to improve the quality of life for the citizens we serve by reducing the availability of illegal drugs and weapons through proactive enforcement efforts. The success of METRICH is a tribute to the cooperation and support within the Law Enforcement Community in the METRICH region and to those citizens who have chosen to improve the quality of life in their communities by assisting METRICH in reporting suspicious activity and valuable information.

**Citizens may report suspicious activity to the crime hot lines at:  
1-800-589-DARE and [www.METRICH.com](http://www.METRICH.com)**

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