

# Press Release

**To:** Print Media  
**From:** Captain Thomas J. Roth  
**CC:**  
**Date:** 5/23/2006  
**Re:** Underage Drinking enforcement

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The Westbrook Police Department will be conducting targeted enforcement efforts toward thwarting underage drinking and persons who furnish alcohol to minors. We will also utilize a public education campaign in an effort to reduce underage drinking and the problems often associated with it.

Through a grant from the Maine Office of Substance Abuse, Westbrook officers, along with other area law enforcement agencies will be staffing extra patrols to monitor stores that sell alcohol, patrol rural locations where parties are known to occur and monitor parties in residences where minors are present. Our goal is to reduce or eliminate motor vehicle accidents involving young people and alcohol, assaults, vandalism and other crimes associated with underage drinking. We will be aggressively enforcing the laws surrounding underage drinking and furnishing.

Illegal possession of alcohol by a minor is a civil violation carrying fines from \$200 to \$600, depending on the number of offenses. Illegal transportation of alcohol by a minor carries a \$500 fine for the first offense, plus a mandatory driver's license suspension of 30 days. Subsequent offenses carry much higher fines and suspensions. Furnishing alcohol to a minor is a Class D criminal offense with up to \$2,000 in fines and up to one year in jail. If consumption of the liquor by a minor causes serious bodily injury or death, the crime becomes a felony.

In years past, some parents and other adults felt if they were supplying a safe place for minors to drink alcohol took control of their car keys, they were ensuring the safety of the people drinking. Although drinking and driving is serious among minors, the other dangers associated with minors consuming alcohol are just as deadly. Because of these concerns, our stance is to become more aggressive in looking for and prosecuting these types of violations. The grant we just received will not only help us to increase enforcement but to also provide some educational components for both youth and parents.

We have already conducted the Project Save-A-Life program at Westbrook and will be conducting meetings with area youth groups.

To assist us in our endeavors, the Westbrook Police Department is encouraging citizens to report incidents of underage drinking or the furnishing of alcohol to minors. One call just might help to save a life! Please call the Westbrook Police Department at 854-2531 if you have any information related to underage drinking or those that furnish alcohol to minors.

Contact with questions:

Captain Thomas J. Roth

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