



Advocating for evidence-based policies and practices  
to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms.

**OMAHA COALITION MEETING**  
*Wednesday, January 19, 2022*  
*9 a.m.*

**A G E N D A**

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Review of the December 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes  
*(please contact PEM staff with corrections)*
- III. 2022 Legislative Session (through Day 8)
  - a. NPR: *Some Public Health Advocates Want More Liquor Law Enforcement*
  - b. Legislative Tracking Sheet is available at [www.projectextramile.org](http://www.projectextramile.org)
- IV. Focus Area Updates
  - a. Local
    - i. Mega Saver
  - b. Policy
    - i. Policy Work Group Meeting – January 26<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m.
    - ii. Alcohol Availability Assessment Tool
  - c. Enforcement
    - i. December Compliance Check Results
  - d. Youth
    - i. Leadership Council – Next meeting: January 24 at 7 p.m.
    - ii. Leadership Network – Next meeting: February 10 at 6 p.m.
  - e. Awareness
    - i. January Research Summary available at [www.projectextramile.org](http://www.projectextramile.org)
- V. Additional Discussion/Announcements
- VI. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date: **February 9<sup>th</sup>, 9 a.m.** via Zoom

**IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS**

Policy Work Group Meeting – January 26 at 3pm via Zoom  
Nebraska Liquor Control Commission Hearings – February 1-2, 2022  
25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Recognition Dinner – May 10, 2022

The mission of Project Extra Mile is to advocate for evidence-based policies  
and practices to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms.

**PROJECT EXTRA MILE**  
**OMAHA METRO AREA**  
**COALITION MEETING MINUTES**  
**November 10, 2021**

- I. Call to Order: Chris Wagner called the meeting to order via Zoom at 9 a.m.
- II. Welcome and Introductions: Welcome and introductions took place. Coalition members and speakers in attendance: Angela Richards, Don Hoes, Hayden Romig, Brenda McDonald, Jason Thompson, Jeff Branstetter, Jim Boucher, Jim Timm, Maggie Forman, Michael Grummert, Lanette Richards, Jona Beck, Sharona Crittenden, and Maggie Ballard. Staff members in attendance: Chris Wagner, Beatha Kliewer, and Liene Topko.
- III. Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the November 10, 2021 meeting were included in the coalition meeting packet. No additions or corrections were made.
- IV. 2021 in Review  
Chris Wagner discussed the impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the coalition's work through limiting in-person meetings and interactions; increases in alcohol consumption; national policy changes to make temporary measures permanent, including cocktails-to-go and sales in a motor vehicle in Nebraska.

Wagner outlined topics discussed throughout the year, such as a panel of experts on DUIs; alcohol trends throughout the pandemic; enforcement challenges as a result of COVID-19; and the alcohol availability assessment tool, among others. He also shared that coalition membership has grown by 53%.

Liene Topko shared that a virtual law enforcement training was held with law enforcement and community members in attendance and planning is ongoing to expand alcohol-related enforcement operations. To date, four waves of compliance checks occurred in 2021 in Cass, Dodge, Douglas, and Sarpy Counties with an overall non-compliant rate of 9% (59/668 businesses).

Topko also reviewed the activities of the two youth initiatives, the statewide Council and metro area Network. The groups are still in their infancy stages but students are excited to learn more and be involved. A virtual retreat was held during the summer. And as a result of the November coalition meeting's discussion, the students are interested to aid in planning a town hall in the community.

Wagner briefly discussed the 23 earned media articles covering cocktails-to-go, alcohol-involved crashes, and alcohol compliance checks. He shared this is an important part of our work because sharing what is going on and how to prevent further harms, aids in changing public opinion which may in turn change policy maker's views and attitudes when they hear from their constituents.

Wagner outlined various conversations with policy and decision makers, organizations, and community members on the work PEM does and how their role can improve the health and wellbeing of our state. Conversation topics included the alcohol-related

executive orders, liquor licensing, evidence-based alcohol screenings, the need to expand alcohol enforcement and resources, and the alcohol availability assessment tool to gather data on what is happening in Nebraska with cocktails-to-go, curbside pickup, and alcohol home delivery.

Lastly, Wagner summarized the 31 occasions PEM provided technical assistance to citizens and groups regarding problem liquor outlets, how to effectively conduct alcohol compliance checks during the pandemic, aiding in shaping the young adult risk behavior survey, ways to address the community's attitude on underage drinking, and more.

V. What's in store for 2022?

Conversations occurred around the permanent passage of the Governor's alcohol-focused executive orders and how these will be limited or enforced. Unfortunately, law makers are mostly hearing from the alcohol industry rather than concerned law enforcement and citizens and there is no official monitoring of what is going on. It was also highlighted that law enforcement is doing everything they can with the resources they have at their disposal to enforce the current laws to their best abilities. A coalition member shared their concern for how easy it is for students to obtain alcohol through home delivery because IDs are not checked, per students. PEM is working with law enforcement partners and other involved parties to expand alcohol delivery compliance checks.

Coalition members were also interested to hear more about the process of alcohol compliance checks and making those results public. PEM aids in compiling and verifying the paperwork after the operations and puts together a press release which is shared with the media, on social media, and later with coalition partners. The paperwork packet is then sent to the Liquor Control Commission for the administrative citation of the business and the law enforcement-issued criminal citation to the clerk is processed through city and county courts.

VI. Additional Discussion/Announcement: none

VII. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date: The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will take place virtually via Zoom on Wednesday, January 19<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m.

## Some Public Health Advocates Want More Liquor Law Enforcement

Written by Melissa Rosales

Some public health experts and advocates in Nebraska are asking state senators to allocate money for more liquor law enforcement.

Restaurants can offer to-go cocktails permanently under a new state law passed last year. Some lobbyists like Chris Wagner, executive director of Project Extra Mile in Omaha, want to see more policies on alcohol use in Nebraska. The organization sent a letter to state senators with recommendations for the legislative session including increasing the alcohol excise tax. The tax of about \$0.03 per drink hasn't changed since 2003.

"If the tax isn't tied to the price, it loses its value, and then becomes less effective in preventing the harms that we see in our communities," Wagner said. "So there is a strong case, and it is considered the best strategy for preventing [alcohol-related] harm, is to increase the price of the alcohol through taxation."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has ranked Nebraska as the fifth-worst binge drinking state in the country. The CDC recommends the state at least double the alcohol tax to prevent more community harm.

The Monument Prevention Coalition in Scottsbluff also signed the letter to state senators. Executive Director Lanette Richards hopes senators will add more funds to liquor law enforcement. The Nebraska State Patrol investigates liquor license applications and monitors businesses for any violations. With miles of road, and over a hundred liquor licenses issued, the Panhandle only has one alcohol liquor enforcement officer.

"I just think to expect the one officer to handle all of that is kind of unreal," she said. "He does a great job. He's on the road, but there's many times he's working very long days and without days off, to try to keep on top of it."

Richards says it would be a big help if the officer had someone to help with the work.

# Summary

## Alcohol Compliance Checks for sales to minors

Conducted on December 17 & 18, 2021

Location: Douglas and Sarpy Counties in Nebraska

Participating Agencies:

Bellevue Police Department  
Douglas County Sheriff's Office  
Nebraska State Patrol  
Omaha Police Department  
Papillion Police Department

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### Results:

<u># of checks</u>	<u>Not in Compliance (n/c)</u>	<u>n/c: Did not Check ID</u>	<u>n/c: Checked ID</u>
176	28 (16%)	16 (57%)	12 (43%)

*Compliance checks coordinated by Project Extra Mile.  
For additional information, call our office at 402-963-9047.*

## Project Extra Mile – Alcohol Compliance Checks

*Conducted on December 17 & 18, 2021*

176 Businesses Checked, 28 Cited for Selling Alcohol to a Minor (16%)

The following businesses were **non-compliant** (cited for selling alcohol to a minor):

Class	License #	Business	Location	City	Zip	Non-Comp	Check ID
C	123643	BREW COFFEE HOUSE & TASTING ROOM	318 N SPRUCE ST	VALLEY	68064	X	
D	101668	CASEY'S GENERAL STORE 3206	210 W REICHMUTH RD	VALLEY	68064	X	
D	124066	CASEY'S GENERAL STORE 6196	9645 IDA ST	OMAHA	68122	X	
C	102078	CHARLIE'S ON THE LAKE	4150 S 144TH ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
C	123493	CHEESEBURGER'S	6610 S 168TH ST	OMAHA	68135	X	
C	124503	CLUBHOUSE LOUNGE	3936 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
D	122187	DINAH MART	1007 GALVIN RD S	BELLEVUE	68005	X	X
C	98091	FAMILY FARE 779	5019 GROVER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
CK	122817	FLIGHT DECK	2929 CALIFORNIA PLZ	OMAHA	68102	X	
C	124082	JAVI'S TACOS	17676 WELCH PLZ	OMAHA	68135	X	
I	123607	JET SPORTS BAR	7444 N 30TH ST	OMAHA	68112	X	
D	67215	KWIK SHOP 675	502 W MISSION AVE	BELLEVUE	68005	X	X
I	123837	MAHALO POKE CO	6920 PACIFIC ST	OMAHA	68106	X	
I	122417	MAXIMO'S CANTINA	2613 N MAIN ST	OMAHA	68022	X	X
D	86071	MEGA SAVER	5444 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	
I	86833	OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE	2414 S 132ND ST	OMAHA	68144	X	X
I	76835	OUTBACK STEAKHOUSE	10408 S 15TH ST	BELLEVUE	68123	X	X
C	121980	PAPIO PUB	129 N WASHINGTON ST	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
D	121997	PETROMART	6508 JOHN J PERSHING DR	OMAHA	68112	X	
I	121547	SKYYBOX GRILL & BAR	6720 S 168TH ST	OMAHA	68135	X	X
D	124234	SPEEDEE MART 2885	11400 S 72ND ST	PAPILLION	68046	X	
I	76711	SULLIVAN'S STEAKHOUSE	222 S 15TH ST	OMAHA	68102	X	
I	118090	TOKYO SUSHI	1215 HOWARD ST	OMAHA	68102	X	
C	79507	TUSSEY'S CASUAL GRILL	9229 MORMON BRIDGE RS	OMAHA	68152	X	
CK	120678	TWISTED VINE	123 N WASHINGTON ST	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
C	115403	VARIETADES SALVADORENAS	3702 Q ST	OMAHA	68107	X	
C	111557	VERDICT BAR & GRILL	1901 HARNEY ST	OMAHA	68102	X	
C	110036	VOODOO TACO	2295 S 67TH ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X

## Project Extra Mile – Alcohol Compliance Checks

*Conducted December 17 & 18, 2021*

176 Businesses Checked, 28 Cited for Selling Alcohol to a Minor (16%)

The following businesses were **compliant** (did not sell alcohol to a minor):

Business	Address	City	Zip	Compliant	Checked ID
3-5-7 CLUB	2414 AMES AVE	OMAHA	68111	X	X
3'S LOUNGE	8919 N 30TH ST	OMAHA	68112	X	X
AHMAD'S PERSIAN CUISINE	4646 DODGE ST	OMAHA	68132	X	X
ALOFT OMAHA AKSARBEN VILLAGE	6201 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	
ALPINE INN	10405 CALHOUN RD	OMAHA	68112	X	X
AMERICAN LEGION POST 32	230 W LINCOLN ST	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
AMERICAN LEGION POST 331	4830 S 21ST ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
AMES AVENUE CONVENIENCE STORE INC	4145 AMES AVE	OMAHA	68111	X	X
ANDYS PLACE	3701 F ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
APPLEBEE'S NEIGHBORHOOD GRILL & BAR	1202 N WASHINGTON ST	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
ARCHERY GAMES OMAHA	11106 Q ST	OMAHA	68137	X	
AVOLI OSTERIA	5013 UNDERWOOD AVE	OMAHA	68132	X	
BAR INNER RAIL FOOD HALL	1911 S 67TH ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
BARRETT'S BARLEYCORN PUB & GRILL	4322 LEAVENWORTH ST	OMAHA	68105	X	X
BEACON HILLS	6750 MERCY RD	OMAHA	68106	X	X
BIG DOG'S BEVERAGE	20310 WIRT ST	OMAHA	68022	X	X
BILLY FROGG'S	1114 & 1120 HOWARD ST	OMAHA	68102	X	
BLACKSTONE MEATBALL	3910 HARNEY ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
BLACKSTONE SOCIAL	3910 FARNAM STREET	OMAHA	68131	X	X
BLIND DAVE'S BAR	5082 S 136TH ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
BOGIES BAR & GRILL	3305 OLD MAPLE RD	OMAHA	68134	X	X
BOGIES BAR & GRILL WEST	14334 U ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
BRICK STREET TAVERN	4936 S 135TH ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
BROKEDOWN PALACE	8805 MAPLE ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
BROWNIE'S WATERING HOLE	125 E 2ND ST	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
BUCK'S BAR & GRILL	27849 W CENTER RD	WATERLOO	68069	X	X
BUFFALO WINGS & RINGS	12240 L ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
BURRITO ENVY	6113 MAPLE ST	OMAHA	68104	X	X
BUTTERFISH	3901 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
CABIN BAR & GRILL	9226 MORMON BRIDGE RD	OMAHA	68152	X	X
CALIFORNIA TACO	3235 CALIFORNIA ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
CASEY'S GENERAL STORE 6130	101 N 30TH ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
CASEY'S GENERAL STORE 6138	13736 Q ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
CHAIKHANA	2329 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
CHARRED	1150 STERLING RDG DR	OMAHA	68144	X	X
CHINA PALACE	661 N 46TH ST	OMAHA	68132	X	X
CILANTROS MEXICAN BAR & GRILL	14440 F ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
CORNER KICK	13806 P ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
CRAFT AXE THROWING	2562 LEAVENWORTH ST	OMAHA	68105	X	X
CRESCENT MOON ALE HOUSE	3578 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
CRYSTAL BEVERAGE MART	4807 S 20TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
CUBBY'S OMAHA REDMAN AVE	4232 REDMAN AVE	OMAHA	68111	X	X
DARIO'S BRASSERIE	4920 UNDERWOOD AVE	OMAHA	68132	X	X
DEPADUA CLUB	2701 S 25TH ST	OMAHA	68105	X	X
DJ'S DUGOUT	17666 WELCH PLZ	OMAHA	68135	X	X

DJ'S DUGOUT	1902 EVANS ST	ELKHORN	68022	X	X
DJ'S DUGOUT	2102 S 67TH ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
DON & MILLIE'S	4430 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
DOUGER'S	4401 CUMING ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
DOWNUNDER LOUNGE	3530 LEAVENWORTH ST	OMAHA	68105	X	X
DR JACK'S DRINKERY	3012 N 102ND ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
DUNDEE CORK & BOTTLE	614 N 50TH ST # 616	OMAHA	68132	X	X
DUNDEE DELL	5007 UNDERWOOD AVE	OMAHA	68132	X	X
EL MEXICANO 6	4922 S 24TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
EVERETT'S	8807 MAPLE ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
FALA'S WINE & CHEESE	2627 N 205TH ST	ELKHORN	68022	X	X
FAMILY FARE 784	14444 W CENTER RD	OMAHA	68144	X	X
FAMILY FARE 797	820 N SADDLE CREEK RD	OMAHA	68132	X	X
FAMILY FARE 799	1230 N WASHINGTON ST	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
FAN TAN CLUB	5915 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	
FIELD CLUB OF OMAHA	3615 WOOLWORTH AVE	OMAHA	68105	X	X
FILM STREAMS	1340 MIKE FAHEY ST	OMAHA	68102	X	
FINICKY FRANK'S	9520 CALHOUN RD	OMAHA	68112	X	X
FOE AERIE 4029	102 N WASHINGTON ST	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
GENJI JAPANESE STEAKHOUSE	14505 W CENTER RD	OMAHA	68144	X	X
GERMAN AMERICAN SOCIETY	3717 S 120TH ST	OMAHA	68144	X	X
GET DOWN ULTRA LOUNGE	8509 N 30TH ST	OMAHA	68112	X	X
GI FORUM	2002 N ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
GODFATHER'S PIZZA 28034	2117 S 67TH ST	OMAHA	68106	X	
GOLDBERGS IN DUNDEE	5008 DODGE ST	OMAHA	68132	X	X
GOLDEEZ	5502 N 103RD ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
GRANT STREET BAR & GRILL	8919 GRANT ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
GREEK ISLANDS	3821 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68105	X	X
GREENBELLY	1917 S 67TH ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
GROVER INN	3505 S 42ND ST	OMAHA	68105	X	X
G'S PUB	5051 S 108TH ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
GUACA MAYA	5002 S 33RD ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
HATFIELD'S CORNER	6002 S 42ND ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
HEARTH CIGAR & PIPES	9230 MORMON BRIDGE RD	OMAHA	68152	X	X
HERBE SAINTE	1934 S 67TH ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
HIRO 88	17664 WELCH PLZ	OMAHA	68135	X	X
HOPPY TACO	5003 UNDERWOOD AVE	OMAHA	68132	X	X
HY-VEE RESTAURANT	11650 S 73RD ST	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
IKA RAMEN	7902 TOWNE CENTER	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
IKA RAMEN	6109 MAPLE ST	OMAHA	68104	X	X
INDUSTRIAL BAR & GRILL	14901 INDUSTRIAL RD	OMAHA	68144	X	X
ISLA DEL MAR RESTAURANTE	5101 S 36TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
JAIPUR, THE	10922 ELM ST	OMAHA	68144	X	X
JERZES BAR & GRILL	501 OLSON DR	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
JIM & JENNIE'S GREEK VILLAGE	3026 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
JINYA RAMEN BAR	7010 DODGE ST	OMAHA	68132	X	X
JUNIOR'S FORGOT STORE BAR & GRILL	11909 CALHOUN RD	OMAHA	68152	X	X
KB'S FOOD SHOP	304 S WASHINGTON ST	PAPILLION	68046	X	X
KENDALL'S TAVERN	6310 GILMORE AVE	OMAHA	68107	X	X
KEYSTONE TAVERN	7821 MILITARY AVE	OMAHA	68134	X	X
KWIK SHOP 653	5929 N 72ND ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X

KWIK SHOP 668	6845 S 167TH ST	OMAHA	68135	X	X
LA CASA PIZZARIA	4432 LEAVENWORTH ST	OMAHA	68105	X	X
LEADBELLY OMAHA	3201 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
LEMON DROP LOUNGE	5423 S 36TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
LO SOLE MIO RISTORANTE ITALIANO	3001 S 32RD AVE	OMAHA	68105	X	X
LOLA'S CAFE	4952 DODGE ST	OMAHA	68132	X	X
LONG JOHN SILVERS	5023 S 108TH ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
LONGHORN STEAKHOUSE 5401	3040 S 143RD PLZ	OMAHA	68144	X	X
MAMA'S PIZZA	715 N SADDLE CREEK RD	OMAHA	68132	X	X
MARU SUSHI KOREAN GRILL	5032 S 108TH ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
MEGA SAVER	7205 LAWNDALE DR	OMAHA	68134	X	X
MEGA SAVER	4420 S 24TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
MURPHY EXPRESS #8774	9810 REDICK AVE	OMAHA	68122	X	X
NBH GROCERY	1817 N 33RD ST	OMAHA	68111	X	X
NEIGHBER'S, THE	4689 LEAVENWORTH ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
NEPALI RESTAURANT	5478 N 90TH ST	OMAHA	68134	X	X
NOLI'S PIZZERIA	4001 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
OLD CHICAGO PIZZA & TAP ROOM	2643 S 144TH ST	OMAHA	68144	X	X
OUTER LIMITS SPORTS BAR & GRILL	28564 W REICHMUTH RD	VALLEY	68064	X	X
PAGETURNERS LOUNGE	5004 DODGE ST	OMAHA	68132	X	X
PAT AND MIKE'S BAR & GRILL	9136 BEDFORD AVE	OMAHA	68134	X	X
PITCH COAL-FIRE PIZZERIA	5021 UNDERWOOD AVE	OMAHA	68132	X	X
PONDEROSA BAR	12203 N 225TH ST	VALLEY	68064	X	X
PONZU SUSHI & GRILL	2110 S 67TH ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
PRIMO'S	5914 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
RAMONAS MEXICAN RESTAURANT	8510 N 30TH ST	OMAHA	68112	X	X
RATHSKELLER BIER HAUS	4524 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68132	X	X
RED LOBSTER 414	2707 S 140TH ST	OMAHA	68144	X	X
REPORT IN PUB	12100 W CENTER RD	OMAHA	68144	X	X
ROMEO'S	14630 W CENTER RD	OMAHA	68144	X	X
SAIGON RESTAURANT	12100 W CENTER RD	OMAHA	68144	X	X
SAM & LOUIE'S NEW YORK PIZZERIA	2949 N 204TH ST	OMAHA	68022	X	X
SGT PEPPER'S ITALIAN CAFE MILLARD	13760 MILLARD AVE	OMAHA	68137	X	X
SIMPLY DELICIOUS RESTAURANT	215 N SPRUCE ST	VALLEY	68064	X	X
SITE 1 BREWING	2566 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
SONESTA ES SUITES OMAHA	6990 DODGE ST	OMAHA	68132	X	X
SULLIVANS	3929 FARNAM ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X
SUPER CARNICERIA EL PUEBLITO	5116 S 24TH ST	OMAHA	68107	X	X
SURFSIDE CLUB	14445 N RIVER DR	OMAHA	68112	X	X
TAQUERIA LOS COMPADRES	10904 Q ST	OMAHA	68137	X	
THERAPY BAR & GRILL	5059 S 108TH ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
TIRED TEXAN BBQ	4702 S 108TH ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
TOBACCO HUT 1	5826 MAPLE ST	OMAHA	68104	X	X
TURF CLUB	2404 S 60TH ST	OMAHA	68106	X	X
UNDERWOOD BAR & GRILL	4918 UNDERWOOD AVE	OMAHA	68132	X	X
VIS MAJOR BREWING	3501 CENTER ST	OMAHA	68105	X	X
WALGREENS 5143	7151 CASS ST	OMAHA	68132	X	X
WALMART 5361	12850 L ST	OMAHA	68137	X	X
WALMART MARKET 3154	2109 TOWNE CENTRE DR	BELLEVUE	68123	X	X
WOHLNER'S NEIGHBORHOOD GROCERY DELI	3253 DODGE ST	OMAHA	68131	X	X

WORLD LIQUOR	2219 N 90TH STREET	OMAHA	68134	X	X
ZIO'S PIZZERIA	12997 W CENTER RD	OMAHA	68144	X	X

# Youth Leadership Network

Students in Grades 8 - 12 are  
invited to join us at the  
UNO Community Engagement Center  
Or By Zoom



REGISTER AT THE LINK TO  
RECEIVE MEETING DETAILS



**MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
IN YOUR COMMUNITY!**



THURS, FEB 10, 2022

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Registration is Required at the  
following Link: [bit.ly/3Eg2uCT](https://bit.ly/3Eg2uCT)

**Let us know if you'll attend in  
Person or via Zoom**

[Youth@projectextramile.org](mailto:Youth@projectextramile.org)

Questions? Text 402-577-0094

**projectextramile**  
PREVENTING ALCOHOL-RELATED HARM



**RESEARCH SUMMARY**  
Date Compiled: January 2022

**Key takeaways from included research:**

- A study reviewed sales and human mobility data to examine changes in alcohol sales and outlet visits during the COVID-19 pandemic. They found major increases in sales of wine and distilled spirits since March 2020, whereas beer sales decreased. Visits to off-premise outlets, like liquor stores, also increased while their on-premise counterpart visits, like to restaurants and bars, decreased.
- Another group of researchers looked at the effects of increased alcohol consumption on alcohol-related liver disease (ALD) and mortality during the COVID-19 pandemic. They found that even a short-term increase in alcohol consumption can substantially increase long-term ADL-related morbidity and mortality. This result calls for individuals and policymakers to make scientifically informed decisions mitigate these negative impacts.
- Previous research demonstrated a positive association between alcohol consumption and epilepsy, however several more recent studies have come out therefore an updated meta-analysis was done. Researchers found that cohort studies did not reveal a significant association between alcohol consumption and epilepsy, however further studies of the general population are needed to assert a definitive relationship and potential threshold.
- Researchers looked at housing status and social determinant of health to be sued for clinicians and policymakers to design and implement interventions to emergency department (ED) patients with unhealthy alcohol use (UAU). They found that UAU is common among ED patients, however it is not clinically recognized, therefore many patients may have higher rates of homelessness along with substance use. Additional studies should consider effective strategies for UAU patients in the ED.

## We really did buy more alcohol during the early pandemic, study finds

Written by Sandee LaMotte

(CNN) The great Covid-19 lockdown of March to June 2020 created more than a run on toilet paper, masks and hand sanitizers. A new analysis of alcohol sales in a sampling of American states has found panic buying of hard liquor and wine also spiked. Sales of beer, however, remained steady or slumped in most states.

"Understanding how alcohol purchase behavior is changed by events such as Covid is important because heavy alcohol use is known to be associated with numerous social problems, especially within the home," said study coauthor Brian Quigley, a research assistant professor of medicine in the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences at the University at Buffalo in New York.

"Our findings suggest the need for a more comprehensive policy relating to alcohol availability, as to whether it should be considered an 'essential' product," said study coauthor Yingjie Hu, an assistant professor in the department of geography at the University at Buffalo.

"Hopefully this could help our society as a whole address problems related to excessive alcohol use during a public health crisis," Hu added.

### *States differed*

The study, published Wednesday in the journal PLOS ONE, examined monthly alcohol sales reported by the US National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism from March to June 2020, comparing that data to the same months in 2018 and 2019. The research team also analyzed anonymous data from over 45 million digital devices, tracking visits to businesses where alcohol is sold.

The study analyzed alcohol sales in 14 states in the United States for which the federal database had complete sales data: Alaska, Arkansas, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Missouri, North Dakota, Oregon, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin.

Different states had different preferences in their top choices of alcohol, according to the data. Overall, beer sales declined in all states in the study except Kansas, Arkansas and Texas, as did visits to bars and pubs.

However, visits to liquor stores increased. Sales of hard liquor, or spirits, rose nearly 11% on average in all states in the study between the months of March and June 2020 compared to prior years. Four states had substantial increases: In Texas, Kentucky, Virginia and Missouri, sales of liquor increased 20% to 40% during that time period.

Sales of wine in the states in the study rose nearly 9% overall in March of last year, but Arkansas, Kentucky and Virginia had a "sustained increase" through June, while Texas showed an increase in wine sales in April, May and June, the study found.

Texas, Kentucky and Virginia had "sustained increases in their sales of both spirits and wine in March, April, May, and June, which can be alarming signals for problematic alcohol use," the study found.

The spike was likely fueled, the authors said, by fears of contracting Covid-19, social isolation, job loss and an uncertain future at the time of the study.

*Dangers of alcohol use*

An increase in alcohol use can have a significant impact on health. Long thought to be beneficial for the heart, studies now show that any heart benefit may be outweighed by other health risks associated with drinking, such as high blood pressure, pancreatitis, certain cancers and liver damage.

Women who drink are at a higher risk for breast cancer. Alcohol contributes about 6% of the overall risk, possibly because it raises certain dangerous hormones in the blood. Drinking can also increase the chance you might develop bowel, liver, mouth and oral cancers.

A 2016 study found that no amount of alcohol was beneficial for health. Alcohol was the leading risk factor for disease and premature death in men and women between the ages of 15 and 49 worldwide in 2016, accounting for nearly one in 10 deaths, according to the study.

## **Police called to disperse large crowd at party near 73rd and Maple Streets**

Written by Kevin Cole

Omaha police were called to disperse a large crowd Saturday night after a party turned violent at a business near 73rd and Maple Streets.

Officers from several precincts, gang and K-9 units were called to Top Flight Fitness, 7330 Maple St., a spokesman for the Police Department said Sunday.

Deputies from the Douglas County Sheriff's Office were also dispatched to help disperse the crowd that officers estimated at "several hundred" people, the spokesman said.

The incident began about 11:15 p.m., when a mother attempting to pick up her son called 911 to say people drinking in a parking lot were out of control. Several other calls to 911 and security officers at the scene reported multiple fights with people refusing to leave.

The owner of Top Flight Fitness was at the scene and made several requests for the crowd to leave before police arrived, the spokesman said. The owner told police that he had rented the business out for the party and needed assistance removing people from the property.

Police used pepper balls, and a medical squad was called to the scene for a report of a possible injury to a security officer. Officers also responded to the Speedee Mart at 72nd and Maple Streets for a report of members of the crowd inside the store causing damage.

Police said two 21-year-old women were arrested on suspicion of disorderly conduct, resisting arrest and obstruction of law enforcement.

The owner of the business couldn't be reached for comment.

## 28 businesses in Douglas, Sarpy Counties accused of selling alcohol to minors

Written by Kelsey Stewart

A series of underage drinking compliance checks resulted in 28 businesses being cited on suspicion of selling alcohol to minors. Seven of those businesses are ones that officials describe as repeat offenders.

Compliance checks at 176 businesses were conducted Friday and Saturday. Project Extra Mile helped pay for and coordinate the effort, said executive director Chris Wagner.

The percentage of businesses cited nearly doubled from the last checks in August and was the highest failure rate since 2015.

Officers from police departments in Bellevue, Omaha and Papillion as well as the Douglas County Sheriff's Office and Nebraska State Patrol conducted the checks. Nineteen minors, with an average age of 18, participated in the enforcement effort.

Of the 28 noncompliant businesses, 57% didn't ask for identification.

Seven of the businesses cited are facing enhanced penalties because they had made prior sales to minors within the last four years. That's the time frame used by the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission to assess penalties. If found guilty, the businesses will face mandatory days of closure and days of suspension, the latter of which can be paid off as a fine at \$100 per day.

Those businesses described as repeat offenders and the previous times they were ticketed:

- Casey's General Store, 210 W. Reichmuth Road (April 2021)
- Dinah Mart, 1007 Galvin Road South (July 2020, April 2021)
- Kwik Shop, 502 W. Mission Ave. (April 2021)
- Mega Saver, 5444 Center St. (April 2021)
- Petromart, 6508 John J. Pershing Drive (April 2021)
- Twisted Vine, 123 N. Washington St. (August 2018)
- Verdict Bar & Grill, 1901 Harney St. (May 2018)

If found guilty, the other 21 businesses could face 15 to 25 days of suspension that could be paid off as a fine at \$50 per day in lieu of suspension.

Compliance checks are typically easy to pass, Wagner said. Youths involved are typically well below the drinking age, and their IDs are printed vertically instead of horizontally.

Considering the number of alcohol-related tragedies involving youths, Wagner said, there shouldn't be any noncompliant businesses, especially around the holidays.

"This is a time, particularly with the holiday break that both high schools and colleges are on, when kids have extra time on their hands," Wagner said. "They're going to look to get their hands on alcohol. Businesses should be more vigilant right now because of that reason."

## Lakota group buys land in Whiteclay hoping to establish health center

Written by Paul Hammel

LINCOLN — A dusty border-town, once notorious for its beer sales, might someday become home to a health center dedicated to alcohol rehabilitation.

This past week, a nonprofit based on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation purchased 48 acres of land in Whiteclay, Nebraska, the former home of four liquor stores that sold nearly 4 million cans of beer a year.

Whiteclay, prior to the closing of the beer stores in 2017, was known for its street people, who openly drank and urinated along its small business district. The beer sales were blamed for multiple problems on the adjacent Pine Ridge reservation just a couple of miles north across the South Dakota-Nebraska border, including rampant alcoholism and fetal alcohol syndrome.

John Maisch, an Oklahoma law professor whose video documentary help illuminate the problems in Whiteclay, facilitated the land sale with Thunder Valley Community Development Corp. He said he hopes that a “restorative health care campus” could be established on the land, that could include short- and long-term substance abuse services, as well as transitional housing and trauma care.

While Thunder Valley will ultimately decide what to do with the site, Maisch said Thursday that he is hoping leaders and donors in Nebraska will embrace the idea of establishing a health center there.

“My intent was to find a tribally-led entity that could help transform Whiteclay from a place of death and destruction into a place of hope and healing,” Maisch said. “It’s the best insurance policy we have to keep the beer stores from returning to Whiteclay.”

Establishing a center for rehabilitation work would be a good thing for Whiteclay, an unincorporated village that sits just south of the state line, said Lou Abold, who operates Abe’s New and Used Store in the village.

Catering to a Christmas rush of shoppers prevented Abold from making more comments on Thursday. The village now includes a Family Dollar store, as well as a nursing home, grocery store and take-out restaurant.

Lack of substance abuse treatment centers, and lack of staff for them, has been cited as a problem for the reservation.

It would be the first venture into health care for Thunder Valley, a tribally-led nonprofit based in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. According to its website, its current projects focus on housing, workforce development, child development and teaching the Lakota language.

Tatewin Means, the executive director of Thunder Valley, did not immediately return email and phone messages seeking comment on Wednesday. She is the former attorney general for the Oglala Sioux Tribe and the daughter of the late Russell Means, a Lakota activist and prominent member of the American Indian Movement, known as AIM.

Maisch purchased the former Lakota Hope Center in Whiteclay, which is leased as office space for the Oglala Lakota Nation's substance abuse treatment program, Anpetu Luta Otipi.

Maisch owned 16 acres of the land sold to the Lakota group. He had an option on the remaining acres. The site sits along Nebraska Highway 87, just east of the tribal-owned Oglala Sioux Lakota Nursing Home.

The purchase price for the 48 acres was \$152,000, according to the Sheridan County Clerk's Office.

Dennis Carlson, a Lincoln attorney who was active in closing the Whiteclay beer stores, said that Native American activist Frank LaMere once described Whiteclay as "a place where there is life but no willingness to live."

"That can change now," Carlson said.

LaMere, who first called for closure of the Whiteclay stores three decades ago, died on June 16, 2019, two years after Whiteclay's beer stores were ordered closed by the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission. The commission cited an appalling lack of law enforcement in the unincorporated town.

## The lines between beer, soda and spirits are blurring as beverage companies seek sales growth

Written by Amelia Lucas

Bud Light is adding cola and orange soda to its seltzer, Mountain Dew is moving into the alcohol aisles and Molson Coors has a whiskey brand.

In the hunt for growth, beverage companies are experimenting in new categories, blurring the lines between beer, soft drinks and spirits to become powerhouses fighting for consumers' so-called "share of throat." But some alcohol companies worry about the potential implications of such a change on the three-tier system, which has kept that industry alive — and legal — for 88 years.

In 2020, total beverage alcohol consumption rose 2% — the biggest gain for the industry in nearly two decades, according to IWSR Drinks Market Analysis. Beer was the only category to see declining volume, true to a yearslong trend. Consumers reached for hard seltzer cans or mixed their own cocktails while stuck at home during lockdowns and maintained those habits this year.

"There are premium dollars going into ready-to-drink canned products in a cooler, and there's growth again," said Barclays analyst Lauren Lieberman at Beverage Digest's "Future Smarts" virtual conference in early December.

In response, drink companies are teaming up to benefit from each other's expertise. For example, Beam Suntory and Boston Beer announced a partnership this summer that would take well-known brands like Truly and Sauza into new categories.

For their part, nonalcoholic companies are diversifying their portfolios as soda consumption shrinks and new regulated beverage markets, like CBD-infused drinks, are on the horizon.

"We're seeing it not just from beer competitors, we're seeing it from nonalcoholic competitors — you've got Coke with Topo Chico," said Ann Mukherjee, CEO of Pernod Ricard North America. "The lines are blurring, and consumers are the ones blurring the lines, so it's allowing a lot more nontraditional companies to come into the space."

Coca-Cola launched Topo Chico Hard Seltzer with Molson Coors Beverage in the U.S. in early 2021 as hard seltzer consumption soared. According to IWSR, U.S. hard seltzer volume surged 130% in 2020, helping the ready-to-drink category overtake spirits consumption, although growth has slowed this year. Topo Chico is the first alcoholic beverage that Coke has sold in the U.S. since the 1980s.

Molson Coors has said Topo Chico could become a top-three hard seltzer brand, joining White Claw and Truly at the top. The drink is closing out 2021 with a 2% share of the roughly \$4.3 billion U.S. hard seltzer market, despite only being available in roughly a third of states. A nationwide launch is slated for January.

In its latest quarter, Molson Coors reported net sales of \$2.82 billion, down 2% from the same time in 2017. In the last five years, as beer sales have lagged and the company has begun transforming its portfolio, the stock has fallen 53%. Coca-Cola, on the other hand, has seen its

revenue climb 9.9% over the last five years to \$10 billion in its latest quarter. The beverage giant's stock has risen 40% in that time.

PepsiCo wasn't far behind its archrival Coke. In August, it teamed up with Sam Adams brewer Boston Beer to announce Hard Mtn Dew. The flavored malt beverage will contain 5% alcohol by volume and sell on the soda's brand equity — without the high caffeine content.

Even before its launch, the drink is controversial. The National Beer Wholesalers Association has raised alarms against the launch, slated for late February. Pepsi has given a license to Boston Beer to produce the drink and created a new company, Blue Cloud, to distribute it.

"They're taking an existing product that's known as a globally recognized soft drink brand and adding alcohol, creating a whole host of challenges as it relates to the regulatory side, but also public health ... we've never had that before," said Craig Purser, CEO of the NBWA.

One important concern is that soda branding for an alcoholic beverage could result in underage drinking — accidentally or on purpose. Boston Beer said the design of Hard Mtn Dew cans will feature "adult-oriented graphics" and emphasize that the drink contains alcohol as part of its efforts to separate the alcoholic beverage from the soda. The company also said it will restrict its marketing to only target consumers 21 years of age or older.

But the NBWA's main argument centers on Pepsi's potential impact on the competitive environment and, thus, the three-tier system that has long governed the alcohol industry. After the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, the alcohol industry adopted the three-tier system, which separated manufacturers, distributors and licensed outlets. Alcohol producers are only permitted to sell their products to licensed importers, distributors and control boards, which in turn are only allowed to sell to licensed outlets — like liquor stores and restaurants.

The complex system is supposed to ensure a legal and competitive marketplace, while safeguarding against the possibility of a Prohibition redux. Washington is the only jurisdiction where manufacturers can sell alcohol directly to retailers.

"Having all of these separations is good, it's fair, and it increases the competitiveness, and it really makes it so a consumer can be targeted properly with exactly what they want to buy," said Tyler Theile, chief operating officer and director of public policy for consulting firm Anderson Economic Group. "If these lines get blurrier, states will have to get more careful about what falls in what category and where they're allowed to be sold."

Many states don't allow large manufacturers to distribute their own products for that reason, although Pepsi is trying to sidestep that by licensing manufacturing to Boston Beer. Unlike Coke, Pepsi owns most of its bottling operations in the U.S., meaning that it has the responsibility of bottling and distributing about three-quarters of all of its North American beverages.

Anheuser-Busch InBev, the largest alcohol producer in the U.S., self-distributes in some markets. Purser estimates that accounts for 6% to 8% of Anheuser-Busch's total volume.

"If successful, [Pepsi's] foray into alcohol to capture a wholly new white space opportunity (while ultimately better leveraging its pre-existing and extensive network of distribution assets) could drive meaningful new sources of revenue and profit growth over the next three to five years, while

challenging the near oligopolistic beer distribution networks of [AB InBev] and [Molson Coors] as a viable third alternative in beverage alcohol distribution,” wrote Deutsche Bank analyst Steve Powers in a Dec. 12 note to clients.

However, Pepsi is entering uncharted regulatory territory as their product lines blur. Many consumer goods companies pay retailers “slotting fees” for more shelf space or premium territory in grocery stores. For alcohol producers and distributors, paying such fees is illegal.

“While PEP will contend that it does not offer ‘slotting fees’ as a rule in the US, any such perceived payments for placement on PEP’s part (whether direct or indirect), or any signs of camouflaging such payments could have significant implications (including fines and/or alcohol license suspension) for PEP and its distributors,” Powers wrote.

Powers also said that Pepsi has acquired a small fleet of trucks that will be dedicated to alcohol distribution, at least in the early days, although it will likely move to ship Hard Mtn Dew to retailers down the line using the same trucks that carry its other products like Gatorade and Quaker Oats.

Emiliano Di Vincenzo, general manager of Pepsi’s alcohol business unit, said in a statement to CNBC that Blue Cloud has filed applications and has received federal approval to operate as a beer wholesaler in several states. It will distribute alcohol products made by independent brewers, while Hard Mtn Dew will be distributed by Blue Cloud, Pepsi bottlers and independent local beer distributors, according to Di Vincenzo.

*‘Growth is hard to ignore’*

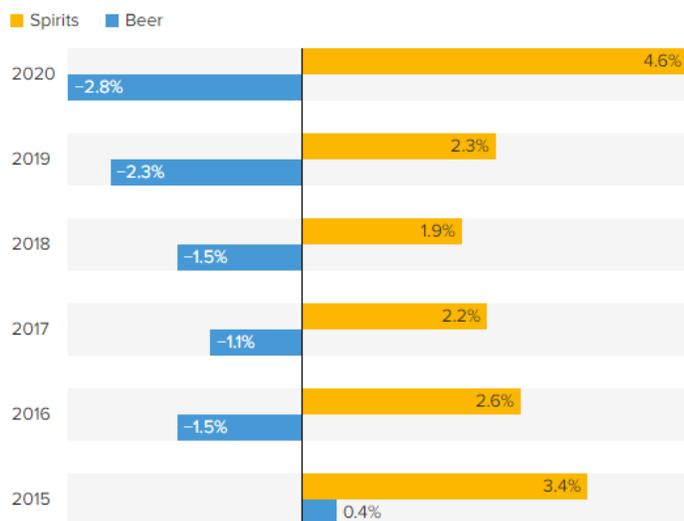
As Coke and Pepsi move beyond soda, some beverage giants are adding the product to their drink lines. AB InBev announced Dec. 16 that it will launch Bud Light Seltzer Hard Soda in January.

Traditional soda has come under fire over the last two decades from health experts who worry about obesity and diabetes. In 2020, consumption of carbonated soft drinks fell 4.7%, according to Beverage Digest’s annual report. Bud Light Seltzer’s take on soda won’t contain any sugar and comes in under 100 calories.

“Given that a significant amount of seltzer fans also purchase soda, we believe Bud Light Hard Soda is perfect for seltzer and soda fans alike,” said Andy Goeler, vice president of marketing for Bud Light.

After an initial pop in sales, beer-branded hard seltzers have seen their growth lag. MKM Partners analyst Bill Kirk wrote in a note to clients that he predicts Bud Light Seltzer and Constellation Brands’ Corona Seltzer will get pulled from the market. Corona Seltzer has reformulated its recipe to rejuvenate sales, while Bud Light Seltzer has focused on introducing seasonal variety packs and new lines.

### Change from prior year in U.S. alcohol consumption, by volume



Source: IWSR Drinks Market Analysis



Brewers are also pushing beyond hard seltzer and flavored malt beverages and into spirits. The category has seen consumption climb in recent years, boosted by mezcal and whiskey, while beer has lagged.

Molson Coors launched Five Trail Whiskey in September, starting in Colorado and expanding to three more states. It's another step in the company's pivot beyond beer, which included dropping "Brewing" from the company name in favor of "Beverage."

"The [whiskey] category's size and growth is hard to ignore," said David Coors, vice president of Molson Coors' next-generation beverages unit and great-great-grandson of original brewer Adolph Coors.

The whiskey uses Coors malt and Rocky Mountain water, a touch that Coors said gave the spirits brand more credibility.

"There are always critics out there, and we've tried to build the product and the brand as tightly as possible to minimize the critics that have tried to come after it," he said.

*Who gets to stay and win?*

And while some distillers might grumble about a beer giant edging into their territory, Coors noted that the two industries have been battling for some time, with spirits companies pushing canned cocktails.

"It's as competitive of a landscape that I think anyone's ever seen," he said.

The alcohol industry is on edge, waiting to see whose products become consumers' new favorites and whose disappear from shelves after failing to catch on.

“There’s a lot of new muscle that companies need to learn if they’re going to succeed in this space, and every competitor brings a different set of competencies to the game, but ultimately it’s the consumer who’s going to decide who gets to stay and win,” Pernod Ricard’s Mukherjee said.

The partnerships forged to make these new drink products may dissolve at the end of this learning curve, experts say. Goldman Sachs analyst Bonnie Herzog said at the Future Smarts conference that companies are in the learning stage now, trying to understand how to market and distribute their new drinks. In the future, they may push more aggressively into those categories, or choose acquisitions over organic growth.

#### *Laying the ground for CBD drinks*

For Coke and Pepsi, the push into alcohol could help the companies’ eventual entry into a newer market with the potential for even greater growth: CBD drinks.

CBD, or cannabidiol, is derived from the marijuana plant and some people believe it provides therapeutic relief. It does not include THC, which is what gives cannabis users a high. The Food and Drug Administration currently forbids selling food and drinks with CBD in it, making the beverage industry’s biggest players cautious to try it in the U.S. Upstarts like Recess Sparkling Water and Empress Teas, however, haven’t been as reluctant.

Cannabis company Canopy Growth, which is partially owned by Corona brewer Constellation Brands, also launched a line of CBD-infused sparkling waters in the U.S. earlier this year. Meanwhile, through Rockstar Energy, Pepsi debuted a line of hemp-infused drinks in Germany earlier this year.

“When you consider CBD beverages coming into the market, that’s going to change a lot in the next 10 to 20 years,” Anderson Economic Group’s Thiele said. “Getting themselves into the regulated beverage market with alcohol, that gives them a foot in the door to potentially continue to be in the regulated beverage market with CBD in the future.”

## **Editorial: Retailers serve society when they follow underage alcohol sales laws**

Written by OWH Editorial Board

We find it both disheartening and encouraging that 28 Omaha-area businesses were cited on suspicion of selling alcohol to minors in a recent compliance check.

It's disheartening because the 16% violation rate was the highest in a compliance check since 2015.

The encouraging news is that law enforcement, helped by Project Extra Mile, continues to recognize the importance of alcohol regulation, particularly involving underage residents.

This effort matters.

Earlier this year, Gov. Pete Ricketts made national headlines arguing against legalization of medical marijuana, saying, "If you legalize marijuana, you're gonna kill your kids."

The Drug Enforcement Administration says "no deaths from overdose of marijuana have been reported" — though the governor cites studies showing "moderate evidence of a statistical association between cannabis use and the incidence of suicidal ideation" and two cases of young men who completed suicide after using cannabis edibles.

We don't have to look hard, though, to find ample evidence that alcohol is a relentless, pitiless killer of our kids.

Every year in the United States, about 5,000 people younger than 21 die from alcohol-related causes, including roughly 1,900 from traffic crashes, according to the National Institutes of Health. Of course, many innocent folks of all ages also die in those crashes.

Project Extra Mile, which describes itself as a network of community partnerships seeking to build awareness of the dangers of excessive and underage drinking, helps pay for and coordinate compliance checks like the one earlier this month. The organization notes that publicity about its evidence-based initiatives relying on the latest science "raises the issue's profile and provides a deeper understanding of the problem and how to address it."

We thank Project Extra Mile and the law enforcement agencies that work with the group.

When a convenience store clerk or restaurant server ignores the law and sells alcohol to a minor, that person is providing a potentially deadly drug to a vulnerable demographic. When business owners or managers don't adequately train and emphasize the need for legal compliance, they are failing not only legally but socially.

This may seem hopelessly prudish, perhaps more so than the governor's crusade against marijuana.

Alcohol, after all, is legal and deeply ingrained in our culture. Many libertarians support lowering the age to 18. The National Youth Rights Association argues that "the drinking age deprives millions of people of their freedom and leads to hundreds of thousands of arrests each year. ... It's

time to look honestly at the ineffectiveness, the injustice, and the harm that this law causes to our society.”

Studies show, though, that discouraging underage drinking and delaying the start of a person’s drinking can save lives.

A report by the National Institutes of Health found that drinking drivers younger than 21 “are involved in fatal crashes at twice the rate of adult drivers. Moreover, alcohol use among youths is strongly correlated with violence, risky sexual behavior, poor school performance, suicide and other harmful behaviors.”

Just as marijuana foes would argue that using that drug has long-term effects on mental health, more extensive research shows that introducing alcohol to a still-developing adolescent brain can lead to lifelong memory impairment. Teen onset of alcohol use also increases the probability of a person abusing or becoming addicted to alcohol in adulthood.

And make no mistake: Alcohol is the most dangerous drug in our society. For all the appropriate worry and action to combat the proliferation of opioids, alcohol has long killed nearly as many people each year as the record 100,000 who died from overdoses of any drug in the 12-month period ended in April 2021.

We’re not for changing laws related to alcohol. We are for enforcing them, particularly to help young people reach adulthood with as safely as possible.

## Nebraska State Patrol: Excessive speeding, DUIs are pandemic trends on roads

Written by Marlo Lundak

OMAHA, Neb. (WOWT) - Monday, the Nebraska State Patrol released numbers for their annual year-end 'Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over' campaign, but it turns out that DUIs aren't just a holiday trend.

State Patrol Troop A Lieutenant Michael Grummert tells 6 News since the pandemic began, numbers of Nebraska drivers cited for driving while intoxicated have increased following a nationwide trend of those numbers falling.

In 2020, the State Patrol arrested 973 drivers across Nebraska for DUIs, and that number grew to 1,174 in 2021.

In the Omaha metro area, 195 drivers were arrested in 2020, and 236 were cited in 2021.

"I believe there's a lot of factors behind that also, when you took a look at the pandemic, in 2020 a lot of bars and restaurants were actually closed down and now what we saw in 2021, a lot of those places were opened back up so there was a steady increase inside of that," Lt. Grummert says.

That's not the only disturbing trend on the roads, however.

"Excessive speeding is one of the biggest things we've seen," Grummert says.

In 2021, there was a slight decrease in citations issued for those driving over 100 mph. In 2020, 1,093 drivers statewide were cited, while 2021 saw 880.

Compared to the five-year average before the pandemic, these numbers are 37% higher.

In the Omaha-metro area, Troop A cited 189 excessive speeders in 2020 and 146 in 2021.

As we drive into a new year, Grummert encourages drivers to follow speed laws to protect themselves and others, always have a sober driver, and put that cell phone down while on the road.

## **LPD arrests increase by 66% during annual drive sober campaign**

Written by Jordan Himes

LINCOLN, Neb. (KLKN) – The Lincoln Police Department’s annual “Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over” campaign was conducted from December 1st to January 1st.

During that time, officers conducted high visibility traffic enforcement and took a zero-tolerance approach to drivers under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

Over the course of the month, the Lincoln Police Department had 93 DWI/DUI arrests, an increase of 66% from 2020.

December’s total drunk driving violations:

- 21 or 23% were the results of a motor vehicle accident investigation
- 3 arrests were for drug impairment (DRE) offenses
- 9 minors under the age of 21 were arrested for DUI
- 5 felony DWI/DUI arrests
- 9 people were arrested for a 2nd offense
- 7 people were arrested for a 3rd offense
- 1 person was arrested for a 5th offense
- The highest Blood Alcohol Content test was .357
- There were 12 refusals for a BAC test and 7 blood draws