

For More Information Contact:

Frank Chaloupka – ImpacTeen
Phone: 312-413-2287
E-mail: fjc@uic.edu

Bob Brewer – CDC
Phone: 770-488-5920
E-mail: bbrewer1@cdc.gov

EMBARGOED for Release at 12:00 p.m. ET, Thursday, April 10, 2003

Alcohol Marketing is Pervasive in Retail Stores

Point-of-purchase (on-site) alcohol marketing is pervasive in store types frequented by teenagers and young adults, according to a new study published today by the ImpacTeen Project and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR).

The study observed nearly 4,000 alcohol retailers throughout the United States during 2000 and 2001. Researchers found that almost all stores (94 percent) had some form of alcohol marketing both in and outside of the establishment. Almost half (44 percent) had interior advertising at low heights, clearly visible to adolescents and children. More than a third advertised alcohol at a "high intensity" level either inside or on the exterior of the store (37 percent interior and 39 percent exterior).

"This aggressive advertising and promotion of alcohol, coupled with easy access, almost certainly promotes risky drinking — especially among young people. Aggressive alcohol point-of-purchase advertising may significantly increase the health and social problems related to such behavior," said Dr. Frank Chaloupka, director of ImpacTeen, a policy research partnership supported by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Convenience stores and grocery stores had the most easily accessible alcohol products, and were most likely to sell iced single beers in buckets near checkout lines - a practice that CDC says promotes impulse alcohol purchasing and that could also promote drinking and driving. What's more, less than half (48 percent) of the stores observed in the study displayed any type of alcohol control signs.

"Underage drinking and alcohol abuse are serious public health problems in the United States, accounting for approximately 100,000 excess deaths per year," said Dr. Wayne Giles, an Associate Director for Science in the CDC's Chronic Disease Center. "It's important, therefore, for us to understand how alcohol marketing can affect consumption, and to strive to curb marketing practices that could promote underage and risky drinking," Dr. Giles added.

"There are currently few limitations on point-of-purchase alcohol marketing, but we hope these findings motivate folks to work with liquor control boards to develop and maintain responsible practices," said Dr. Tim Naimi of CDC's Alcohol Team and a co-author of the study.

The full report will be available online on Friday, April 11 at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/>.

###