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## Police sting turns up alcohol sales to minor

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BY PATRICIA ROY

[PROY@HOLDENLANDMARK.COM](mailto:PROY@HOLDENLANDMARK.COM)

Most people know that package stores, bars and restaurants have an obligation to check the ID's of their patrons. What may not be as well known, is that twice each year, the Holden police department checks the checkers, sending out an underage person to attempt alcohol buys at all licensed places in town.

The most recent checks were done during the evening of Oct. 28, relying on an 18 year old male to make the buys. He had been given some training for the task and was not known to anyone in town, Police Chief George Sherrill said.

The young man visited 16 establishments and using his own under 21 license, was able to buy at nine of them, a number that surprised Chief Sherrill.

"Usually, it's one to three, tops," he said. He didn't know why establishments weren't checking ID's as carefully this year, but said those who were in violation this year were not on last year's list.

Violators were notified of the sting results, with suggestions for increased training for sales clerks and servers.

"We're not looking to punish them. This is strictly so they know they need to do training for their employees," Chief Sherrill said.

Those who passed the test received letters of congratulation from the chief.

The department has been carrying out the sting for several years in the spring and fall, heading into holiday and prom seasons.

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