

96 percent of locations pass liquor test; 3 fail

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KEARNEY — Eighty-three businesses passed a liquor compliance check Friday in Buffalo County.

However, three employees were cited for selling alcohol to a minor. Businesses where clerks failed the compliance checks were San Pedro Mexican Restaurant at 3907 Central Ave., Mongolian Grill at 5012 Third Ave. Suite 178, and Casey's General Store at 2710 W. 24th St.

“That’s pretty good compliance,” said Mike Young, a KPD sergeant.

Police reports have been forwarded to the Buffalo County Attorney’s Office and the Nebraska Liquor Control Commission for possible prosecution. Selling alcohol to a minor is a Class I misdemeanor, and if convicted, clerks face up to one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

An employee of Dad’s Tavern was cited for criminal mischief after refusing service to the minor cooperating with the checks, then cutting up the minor’s driver’s license.

Last week the Nebraska State Patrol issued a news release warning businesses it would be conducting compliance checks. Compliance checks are conducted periodically to ensure that businesses are in compliance with the state’s alcohol laws.

During the compliance checks, informants younger than 21 years old working with police enter each business and attempt to purchase alcohol. Informants use their own identification.

The checks were conducted with officers from the Buffalo County Sheriff’s office, the Kearney Police Department and the State Patrol.

The alcohol compliance checks were made possible with funding provided by Buffalo County Community Partners and an overtime grant for police from the state Office of Highway Safety. Since 2006, BCCP has been providing monthly beverage servers training for liquor store owners, clerks and employees on and off premises.

In the Training for Intervention Procedures curriculum, clerks are taught how to check identification, what to look for in a fake ID and behavioral signs to look for in the buyer.

Buffalo County has four TIPS instructors, and the program is certified by the liquor commission. Anyone interested in taking a TIPS class can contact the BCCP at 865-2284. There are more than 600 trained retailers in Buffalo County.

A list of the businesses that passed the compliance checks was unavailable from the State Patrol at press time.