



Public Health
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Frederick County Health Department

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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SECOND QUARTER ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO MERCHANT SALES COMPLIANCE CHECKS

FREDERICK, MD – In an effort to protect public health and promote health and wellness among our youth, the Frederick County Health Department's [Merchant Sales Compliance Initiative](#) aims to reduce minors' access to alcohol and tobacco products by conducting random merchant sales compliance checks of businesses located in Frederick County. Funding for these activities is provided by the Maryland Department of Health.

Tobacco and alcohol use by minors can harm their physical health and impair healthy brain development. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, nearly 90 percent of adult smokers began smoking before age 18. Additionally, according to the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), by age 18, about 60 percent of teens reported having at least one drink of alcohol. Environmental strategies, including policy and enforcement efforts, are identified as strategies to prevent the misuse of alcohol and tobacco by

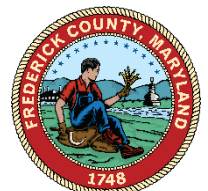
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youth, according to the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

In Frederick County, underage individuals assist in the execution of both alcohol and tobacco merchant sales compliance checks. All underage individuals possess their valid state-issued ID or driver's license, which is provided to every merchant who asks for identification. If the merchant asks their age, the buyers are required to reply truthfully. All underage individuals are accompanied and observed by a plainclothes officer.

Between October and December 2019, the Frederick County Health Department's Merchant Sales Compliance Initiative conducted 18 tobacco sales compliance inspections. Of the 18 businesses checked, 16 passed and 2 were issued civil citations for non-compliance with state law.

During the same time period, alcohol merchant sales compliance checks were conducted. Of the 72 alcohol businesses checked, 8 sold alcohol to the underage buyers. These violations were referred to the Frederick County Liquor Board. [Click here](#) for the complete report of businesses checked and the results.

For more information about the Frederick County Health Department, Merchant Sales Compliance Initiative, call 301-600-1755 or visit <https://health.frederickcountymd.gov/merchants>.

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