

## **Alcohol Sold To Minors In Undercover Sting**

*Teenager Wore Camera, Tried To Buy Alcohol  
Reported By Larry Flowers, WSMV*

**LaVERGNE, Tenn.** -- LaVergne police are cracking down on businesses that sell alcohol to teenagers. They conducted an undercover sting, where unsuspecting clerks and food servers took the bait.

A teenager wearing an undercover video camera went into a Kroger grocery store and picked up a six-pack. He first went through a self-check-out and was asked to take his ID to the clerk.

After several attempts at entering the teen's date of birth, the clerk sent the teen to another checkout line. Police said this clerk entered the wrong date of birth and sold the beer to the minor even though he isn't 21.

"We knew that Kroger stays on top of that law; we never had a problem with them prior," said Sgt. Mike Mullen of LaVergne police. "But we were a little surprised that we were able to go in and buy beer on the first attempt."

Out of 31 businesses in LaVergne that sell beer and alcohol, 10 clerks sold beer to the undercover teen. The Alcohol Beverage Control assisted LaVergne with the sting.

At the New Apple restaurant, the clerk made four mistakes, police said: She didn't ask for an ID, brought an unopened beer, rung up the teen at the cash register and then told the teen he could take the beer with him, which is against the rules for a restaurant.

A clerk at the Exxon was so distracted talking about country music singer Tim McGraw that she never asked for an ID, even with her manager standing right beside her.

And then there was the exception: A liquor store clerk did not sell liquor to the teen. The clerk took it a step further, even getting the tag number and calling police, telling them a minor was going around town trying to buy alcohol.

LaVergne police said they want to send a clear message to these businesses. All the clerks were given citations. There were no repeat offenders from last year.

"If they do repeat, it goes from a misdemeanor to a felony," Mullen said.

The owners of the businesses found to be in violation now have to appear before the LaVergne beer board. They can receive a hefty fine or be prohibited from selling beer for a period of time.