

Wine and Spirits Wholesalers Joins Effort to Curb Underage Drinking in Tennessee
WSWT
September 29, 2011

Wine and Spirits Wholesalers Joins Effort to Curb Underage Drinking in Tennessee
Beverage Alcohol Industry, Federal Government Partner for 5th Year on "We Don't Serve Teens" Initiative

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Tennessee (WSWT) today announced it is partnering for the 5th year with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) on the "We Don't Serve Teens" campaign, an initiative aimed at curbing underage drinking through increased public awareness.

Since 2007, Tennessee wholesalers have spearheaded the distribution of "We Don't Serve Teens" materials to restaurants and retail wine and spirits outlets across the state. The restaurants and retail outlets display the stickers and posters to remind customers that it is unsafe, illegal and irresponsible to provide alcohol to teens under any circumstances.

"As an industry, we feel a special responsibility to help protect the youth in our communities by preventing their access to alcohol," said Thomas E. Bernard, president of WSWT. "The 'We Don't Serve Teens' campaign is an effective way to spread the message to adults purchasing alcohol to never allow these products to get into the hands of teens. We are committed to working alongside state and local governments to support efforts to educate Tennesseans of the dangers associated with underage drinking, and are proud to continue being a part of this important initiative."

"We Don't Serve Teens" confronts the pervasive problem of alcohol use among the underage population. According to recent data from the Century Council, 41 percent of 12th graders, 29 percent of 10th graders and 14 percent of 8th graders reported using alcohol in the past month. In Tennessee, 20 percent of the state's youth (12-20 year olds) have reported consuming alcohol in the past month.

"We go to great lengths to keep alcohol out of the wrong hands," Bernard said. "As beverage alcohol wholesalers, we feel responsible to spread a message of responsibility. The products we sell are privileged and tightly controlled by our state and local governments, but once alcohol leaves a retail establishment our customers must also play a role in maintaining a highly regulated system."

The national "We Don't Serve Teens" week was lauded in 2007 by Congress with the passing of a resolution introduced by the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America. "The 'We Don't Serve Teens' campaign recognizes that each of the three tiers of the beverage alcohol industry play a key role in the prevention of underage drinking and unites all of those participants in a concerted effort to protect America's youth," the resolution states.

About Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Tennessee (WSWT)

The Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Tennessee, a registered 501(c)(6) organization, is a statewide trade association comprised of 18 local businesses in Tennessee that play a central role in wine and spirits distribution. The mission of WSWT is to maintain the appropriate legal and regulatory environment for the distribution of beverage alcohol in the state of Tennessee so as to ensure the safe and responsible use of its products. Please visit www.wswt.org <<http://www.wswt.org>> for more information.

About “We Don’t Serve Teens”

The We Don’t Serve Teens campaign, sponsored by a coalition of public and private sector organizations, including the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), has been recognized by the U.S. House and Senate. The FTC prepared and maintains www.DontServeTeens.gov <<http://www.DontServeTeens.gov>> .