



Survival Tips for Spring Quarter and Spring Fests: Problems with Underage Drinking and Parties in Athens

It's no surprise that some students find themselves in trouble with the law during spring quarter. The weather is nice, the "fests" are in full swing, and unfortunately, many students are choosing to engage in illegal activities such as alcohol and drug violations. Consider the following information before having or attending a party or fest:

Having a Party?

1. **Keep it under control.** Everyone loves a party, but once you open it up to the whole world, you include undercover cops. Have someone check ID's at the door, and keep the kegs in a confined area. (Don't get charged with "furnishing" alcohol to minors" – it's a \$500 mandatory fine). Be sure to have soft drinks (you're making the effort to accommodate anyone under 21 without encouraging their drinking). Post an "INVITED GUESTS ONLY" sign.
2. **Watch the noise.** After 10:00 p.m. from Sunday to Thursday and 12:00 a.m. on Friday and Saturday, a loud party is an invitation for the police—and a fine of \$100. Give your neighbors a note in advance. Ask them to call you (give phone no.) if the noise bothers them. Remember: A group of people on a porch talking loudly late at night can be charged with "disturbing the peace". The police do not have to give you a warning first. Know your neighborhood.
3. **Know your place.** Keep your guests from going on the street or sidewalk with open containers. You may want to put up plastic "barriers" so your guests know to stay on your property. Put a sign up advising your guests to empty their cups before leaving and carry them upside down if they are stepping onto the sidewalk.
4. **Provide for your guests.** Have you thought of bathroom needs? Guests who are tempted to "water" the bushes, may face disorderly conduct charges. Consider renting a porta-potty (usually under \$100, delivered)
5. **Don't drink and drive, and don't let drunken guests drive.** The alcohol level for most underage drinkers is .02 (about 1 beer for most people). You could be held civilly liable for a guest who consumes alcohol at your party and then drives a vehicle if there is an accident.

Approached by the police or liquor control?

1. **Beware the trip home.** The police often look for stragglers. If you're stopped close to home, let the police know where you're going.
2. **Don't confess.** You do not have to tell the officer how old you are. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT, AS LONG AS YOU GIVE HIM YOUR NAME AND WHERE YOU LIVE. You do not have to admit to guilt or answer any questions, but do not lie! (If he arrests you for underage drinking and did not know your age at the time of arrest you might not be convicted.) REMEMBER: A SECOND UNDERAGE CONSUMPTION CHARGE MAY RESULT IN JAIL TIME!
3. **Avoid guilt by association.** Do not argue with the police. Do not try to resist your arrest. If there are witnesses try to find out their names. Do not follow a friend or go to the police station if you've been drinking.

THE CENTER FOR STUDENT LEGAL SERVICES DOES NOT ENCOURAGE ANYONE TO VIOLATE THE LAW. WE DO NOT CONDONE OR ENCOURAGE UNDERAGE OR HIGH RISK DRINKING OR DRUG USE. WE DO BELIEVE THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND BE FREE FROM UNDUE HARASSMENT. THIS INFORMATION DOES NOT CONSTITUTE LEGAL ADVICE, NOR IS IT INTENDED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR LEGAL ADVICE.

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