



Orange County Government  
Office of County Executive Steven M. Neuhaus  
**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Orange County reminds parents during prom season that serving  
alcohol to minors is illegal**

*Social Host Law holds anyone 18 years of age or older responsible when they  
permit or don not stop the consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors on  
premises*

Goshen, N.Y. – With prom season underway, Orange County Executive Steven M. Neuhaus, Sheriff Carl E. DuBois and District Attorney Dave Hoovler are reminding residents to be aware of the County’s Social Host Law and that there are consequences for breaking the law.

“This is especially relevant as prom and graduation season is upon us,” Neuhaus said. “This is a time for celebration, not recklessness. Parents should realize that they can face serious consequences by allowing underage drinking at their home. We will not tolerate behavior that endangers the residents of Orange County.”

Neuhaus signed legislation last March to enact a Social Host Law, which is aimed at deterring the consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors by holding anyone 18 years of age or older responsible when they permit the consumption of alcoholic beverages by minors on premises. Under the Social Host Law, it is illegal for homeowners or any host 18 years or older to knowingly allow underage drinking at their home or a party, or to not take action to stop underage drinking after they are made aware of it.

The Social Host Law carries the following punishments:

**First offense:** Constitutes a violation and carry a fine of \$500. The Court will also order the completion of an alcohol awareness program and/or an appropriate amount of community service time not to exceed 30 hours.

**Second offense:** Constitutes an unclassified misdemeanor punishable by a fine of \$1,000 and a jail term, not to exceed one year; or both a fine and imprisonment.

For the second straight year, Hoover has written to every school superintendent in Orange County, asking them to remind parents in their districts about the importance of following that law and restricting underage drinking.

“As parents, we owe it to our children to keep them out of harm’s way and, for that reason, in my office we take enforcement of the Social Host Law very seriously,” Hoover said. “Each spring, many of our children participate in graduations, proms, and school formals. These events should be celebrations for our children and their loved ones. Unfortunately, these same events can be marred by tragedy when someone underage consumes alcohol resulting in motor vehicle crashes and other incidents. Orange County’s Social Host Law is designed to keep our children safe from underage drinking and its potential dangers.”

The County has teamed with the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Council (ADAC) of Orange County to raise awareness about the dangers of underage drinking. ADAC provides residents with programs and services to address substance abuse and addiction as a health condition which affects the individual, family and the community. The non-profit organization provides information, referral and outreach services, as well as operating a School of Addiction Studies that provides credentialing in substance abuse for all human service professionals.

ADAC-Orange County initiatives include Parents Who Host Lose the Most Workshops, which educates communities by developing assemblies and prevention activities at Orange County high schools, youth and adult alcohol awareness programs and educational videos.

“Those of us in law enforcement are always concerned for the safety of students during prom and graduation season,” DuBois said. “Parents throughout Orange County share those concerns. We need to work together to keep our children safe

by reminding them of the dangers of distracted driving, speeding and drinking and driving.”

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