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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Alcohol Compliance Checks in Putnam County

PUTNAM COUNTY, TN – The Putnam County Sheriff's Office is partnering with Cookeville Police Department and Power of Putnam to conduct alcohol compliance checks at various retailers throughout Putnam County. The compliance checks, which are funded through a federal Drug-Free Communities support grant received by Power of Putnam, will be randomly scheduled at a variety of retail outlets in the coming year. The main focus of the program is really to increase awareness of underage drinking and the importance of maintaining a legal I.D. enforcement process. Depending on their record, retailers that fail the Alcohol Compliance Checks may be subject to court mandated classes, court fees, fines and eventual loss of their alcohol/beer license.

"Most of our local stores do a good job of checking I.D.'s," said Power of Putnam Executive Director Bill Gibson. "Occasionally, we will help a business owner identify an employee who needs additional training. Our main objective is awareness and education."

According to the "2015-2016 Tennessee Partnership for Success Rx" survey conducted on behalf of the TN Department of Health & Substance Abuse Services, 17% of students reported having used alcohol in the past 30 days and the average initiation for drinking alcohol is 13.7 years of age. Of those who reported drinking alcohol, 11.1% reported getting it from an older friend (over 21), 12.5% reported giving someone money to buy it for them, and 12.9% said they got it at a party.

"It is important for parents to understand that underage drinking can have far-reaching consequences for them and their child," said Sheriff Eddie Farris. "We have seen tragic accidents related to teenage drinking and driving. We have also seen deaths due to alcohol poisoning as well as fights/head injuries sustained while intoxicated. Drinking often leads to increased drug use, sexual misconduct, and other criminal behaviors committed while under the influence. It is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to drink alcohol. Any minor who is found intoxicated and anyone who has participated in obtaining the alcohol for that minor can be arrested and prosecuted under the Illegal Consumption Act."

The Drug-Free Communities Act of 1997 was established to enhance awareness of substance abuse and promote an environment of prevention by engaging parents and the community in programs to prevent the sale and purchase of controlled substances to minors and prevent risky behaviors.

Power of Putnam offers Alcohol Awareness Training Programs sponsored by the State Alcoholic Beverage Commission. There is a nominal fee to cover the cost of course materials. Any business that is interested should contact Jennifer Matthews at Jennifer@PowerOfPutnam.org.

Media contact:

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