

NABCA DAILY NEWS UPDATE

Monday, August 3, 2020

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TODAY'S HIGHLIGHTS

- Bars closed and traffic dropped during the pandemic, but DUI arrests are up
- Fingerprint, eye scan to buy booze, cigs is proposed
- Woolies liquor warehouse workers walk off the job after new virus case
- New MMWR: 93,000 deaths each year due to excessive alcohol use in the U.S.
- North Coast wineries grapple with proposed U.S. health guidelines to curb alcohol use for men
- Plane travel and coronavirus: US passengers are (illegally) bringing their own alcohol on board

NABCA News

Visit NABCA's COVID-19 Resource page for updates regarding policy changes that effect on- and off-premise retail operations.

TTB NEWS

You can now find all of [TTB's COVID-19-related news and guidance](#) in a single location.

ADDITIONAL LINKS

Visit NABCA's website for information on:

- Control State Agency Information
- Doing Business in Control States
- NABCA News

CONTROL STATE NEWS

PA: Bars closed and traffic dropped during the pandemic, but DUI arrests are up

The Philadelphia Inquirer
by Patricia Madej
August 2, 2020

The ripples formed from the COVID-19 pandemic may be reaching the road.

The number of DUI arrests neared pre-pandemic levels in early summer, according to Pennsylvania State Police figures, despite much less traffic and pandemic restrictions imposed on bars and restaurants.

State Police recorded 420 total DUI arrests during the last week of February, shortly before Gov. Tom

Wolf's shutdown order in March. While arrests and crashes stayed low from March until late June, DUI arrests crept back up to 407 for a week in late June — down just 3% from pre-pandemic figures recorded in February.

The numbers are “just stunning,” said Deni Carise, chief science officer at Recovery Centers of America. Many people likely are turning to alcohol “to kind of ease them” through the uncertainty of the pandemic, she said. Infrequent or moderate drinkers can become heavier drinkers as the four walls around them grow more familiar.

“For people who did not have a problem previously, I think those folks are drinking more,” Carise said. “I think they’re drinking a little more recklessly. ... I mean, the numbers are so clear.”

The state's liquor sales spiked in March before stores closed to slow the spread of the coronavirus. High demand prompted a Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board website crash in April, while Pennsylvanians could sip to-go cocktails from Capri-Sun-type pouches in May.

State Police provided weekly statistics on a range of incidents from March to late June with the help of a specialized team charged with collecting data through the pandemic. The effort stopped when much of Pennsylvania turned “green” by mid-June, said a spokesperson, Trooper Brent Miller. Though he could not provide weekly breakdowns since then, Miller said there were 1,333 total DUI arrests from June 27 through July 23 this year.

Miller did not have comparative 2019 data to share. There were 22,139 total DUI arrests across Pennsylvania last year.

Asked why crashes and arrests saw more of a drop-off than DUI arrests, Miller noted that much of the state had reopened by June. “A lot of things” go into DUI

enforcement, and “the numbers fluctuate,” he cautioned. State police have not changed procedures related to DUI arrests that would affect numbers, he said.

“Troopers are still out there diligently doing their jobs, looking for those individuals who may be impaired by alcohol or drugs,” Miller said.

While DUI arrests in Philadelphia by State Police were down from last year, the 37 reported in May neared the 42 recorded in February. Fifty-two were recorded in May 2019.

There’s been a slight uptick in DUI-related crashes along roads that State Police patrol in Philadelphia lately, with 12 in June compared with eight reported in February. State Police patrol I-95, I-76, I-476, 422, and I-676 in Philadelphia.

DUI arrests recorded by Philadelphia police dropped in April but rose to 132 in May, which is about 32% lower than in 2019.

State Trooper William Butler “can’t say” that DUIs have been a new issue to arise from the pandemic. Driving under the influence is “a long-existing problem,” he said.

“Alcohol and drugs [are] not going anywhere,” Butler said. “Just because bars are closed, that’s not going to stop a person from drinking.”

Richard J. Fuschino, a criminal defense lawyer whose office is based in Center City, said he hasn’t noticed a drop in the number of DUI inquiries he typically gets. The calls to Mothers Against Drunk Driving’s Pennsylvania office have been about the same, said Mila Hayes, manager of victim services there.

“We have to continue to push what people’s personal responsibility is, to always designate a non-drinking driver, to obey the open container laws that prohibit drinking in vehicles, and to monitor your guests at home or in your establishments to make sure they have a safe and sober ride home,” Hayes said. “That is always going to exist.”

There could be a number of explanations, said Matthew Hiller, associate professor in the department of criminal justice at Temple University. While the figures show “a very interesting uptick,” but with only a few months of data, it’s difficult to determine whether a trend is playing out.

But it is clear that mental-health problems have worsened, and more are using antidepressant and

anxiety medications. At the same time, aggressive driving along emptied roadways in the region hasn’t abated.

“If people are drinking more because of COVID,” Hiller said, “if they’re drinking to feel less depressed or less anxious about what’s going on, they’re going to be getting into cars and driving home, too.”

DUIs generally rise in the summer when more people are out and slow when the weather cools, he said.

But this summer is a strange one. Drivers are trickling back to reopened workplaces and taking socially distanced vacations, but the volumes still aren’t where they once were. As of mid-July, traffic on interstates and major freeways was down 13% compared with last year, a PennDot spokesperson said. Traffic is down around 24% along the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

“The thing to do is to watch the fall numbers” on DUIs, Hiller said. “Let’s watch the fall, and then obviously the implications for that would be increasing treatment.”

It’s not likely that the motorists are heading to or from their favorite watering holes, either. The state recently tightened indoor dining restrictions — something residents still can’t enjoy in Philadelphia.

“As the state began to open up and people could begin to see close friends and family, it is likely that the drinking continues or is increased perhaps as a way to celebrate finally seeing one another,” said Terri Erbacher, clinical associate professor in the school psychology program at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. “And then individuals get into their cars to drive home.”

Could a return to “normal” routines help numbers from trending upward? It’s a possibility, but what was familiar months ago isn’t likely to return anytime soon. Unemployment remains high, and many who are working are still adjusting to a telecommuting lifestyle, which is expected to stick around.

“People don’t have a normal schedule,” Hiller said, “and a lot of people who don’t have normal schedules start getting depressed.”

It could be a “hard hit” for DUIs if accessibility to alcohol increases, but people aren’t back to work, Carise said.

“I would expect these numbers to go up if there’s a significant amount of time where we have bars, restaurants open, but the structure of going out to work every day is not back in place,” Carise said. “I could see these numbers going up.”

MT: Montana brewers battle shortages in aluminum as demand for packaged beer grows

Billings Gazette

By Anna Paige

August 2, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically altered the behaviors of Americans, including how they drink. While the sale of alcohol in restaurants has sunk, the sale of package liquor and beer has boomed. That has created a new problem: a shortage of aluminum cans.

With reduced occupancy and fewer people going out to drink in taprooms, brewers across Montana are feeling the pinch. Brewers with canning lines have been in a better position to adapt.

Tim Mohr, owner of Angry Hank's Microbrewery in downtown Billings, has made draft beer his business. Until the pandemic, he maintained a bustling brewery that thrived on in-person sales, on-site consumption, and distribution of kegged beer to bars and restaurants throughout the state.

"We'd always done so well on draft, we weren't too concerned about the cans," said Mohr. "Even in my worst case scenario, I didn't see this coming."

Mohr said the shutdowns and limited seating has "just been horrendous" for business. Sales at Angry Hank's are down 60% year-to-date during one of the brewery's busiest times of year.

"Our whole business is based on social gathering places," Mohr said. "Obviously, you have to change or you die."

Hitting home

In response to low sales at the taproom, Mohr inked a deal in late July with a canning line from Wild Goose, based in Colorado, and drained his retirement account to do it.

"If you're a brewery and you are going to stay alive, you have to get into cans," said Mohr.

Wild Goose and other canners are experiencing high demand, and Mohr said he's three months out from receiving equipment. He hopes to have canned beer on the shelves by Christmas.

Mohr will source cans from BSG CraftBrewing, also in Colorado. The company acts as a wholesaler of beverage cans from producers such as Ball and Crown.

The delay in implementing the canning line puts him in uncertain times for obtaining cans when he needs them, and he's without capacity to store them, remaining at the mercy of the market when he finally is ready.

"Unfortunately, everyone is trying to do the same thing," Mohr said. "You can't get equipment, and you can't get cans. You do the best you can."

Can-do attitude

Sister breweries Überbrew and By All Means (BAM) are making the most of the new West End facility that opened in October, with a canning line.

Though based in Billings, Überbrew products have been brewed and packaged on contract at Sleeping Giant Brewing Co., in Colorado. When COVID-19 hit, the owners pulled brewing back to Montana, for now.

"It let us keep our production staff working through the slowdown," said Mark Hastings, head brewer and shareholder in both companies. Hastings has been busy using the 20-barrel system at BAM, which includes nine stainless fermenters and the capacity to produce more than 148,000 gallons of beer per year.

Sales of canned Überbrew are on track to outpace last year's numbers, and the business is hoping for its best month to date on package sales. "I can't imagine trying to make a go of it without the canning line," said Hastings. "I feel for those people that don't have those options."

According to Hastings, the aluminum can shortage hasn't been an issue so far. The business maintains a contract with Royal Packaging, which produces cans in the Missouri area. Product sales are tracked and orders of blank aluminum cans are kept on hand, based on sales history.

"So far, our business has not run into that shortage problem," said Hastings. "I'm not saying it's not going to be a problem in the coming months."

Sam Hoffmann, of Red Lodge Ales and Last Chance Cider, estimates the businesses sell about 2 million cans of beverages a year, and currently he's sitting on a stockpile of 500,000 cans, stored in Billings, Red Lodge, and at Ball in Colorado.

Hoffmann's businesses produce enough volume — including the popular Bent Nail IPA, Czechmate Pilsner, and Glacier Amber — that he orders blank and preprinted cans by the truckload (200,000-plus cans at a time).

On Friday, Hoffman received word that their latest order of 25 pallets of aluminum cans would be delayed. The shipment, expected to arrive the first week of August and include preprinted cans for the seasonal Oktoberfest, won't be available until late August or early September, according to the manufacturer.

"Oktoberfest is a very time-sensitive seasonal," Hoffman said. "We can't afford to get to the end of August or early September and then have Ball delay the order again."

For this batch of seasonal beer, Hoffman will use labels atop preprinted cans he has in storage, a technique he often employs with cans that have been sitting around. Though the cost is higher (labels can cost 5 to 10 cents each), "it's the price of doing business," Hoffman said.

Smaller brewers that don't have the storage or the capital to fund such large orders are at the mercy of wholesalers. Through Mohr's supplier, he can order one pallet at a time. Though he pays a bit more than larger brewers, Mohr said such systems are designed to help out the small guys. "We can't order in big enough quantities. Eventually, we will get to that point, but right now I can't. It's just a matter of growth."

At Thirsty Street, owner Shea Dawson anticipates their aluminum can supply will dry up at the end of the year. Dawson and his wife Jill, along with partners Paolo and Nancy Garbasi, now operate two locations in Billings, after purchasing Yellowstone Valley Brewing Co. in February. With the purchase came about 96,000 16-ounce cans.

Thirsty Street's beers have been on the market for only a couple months, but sales of canned beer have been steadily increasing, Dawson said. "It's a huge offset to the taproom hit."

The business distributes canned beer across the state, but the vast majority of their business is in Yellowstone County. Dawson estimates they'll produce about 2,000 barrels of beer this year between the two facilities. At the original location, they are now focusing entirely on barrel aged sour beers, which are about 5% of their production output.

"We are not going to break any records this year, but it's going good," Dawson said. "We want to sell as many of these as we can, and we are selling them as

quick as we can make them, but there's a balance now — you don't want to sell out in a month."

Why can?

Though bottles have long been the primary mechanism for delivering craft beer across Montana, brewers are increasingly making the shift to cans. Cans offer perks that bottles can't, including ease of portability.

"I need to be able to get a can in your hand," said Mohr, of Angry Hank's. "If you're not drinking us, you are drinking someone else."

Hastings, of Überbrew and BAM, described some pushback in the market when shifting from bottles to cans. "People associated quality with the package, and for some reason they thought glass means it's better." Yet, aluminum is like a "small keg," said Hastings, blocking out light and obtaining low dissolved oxygen levels. "Beer in cans is often much more high quality than anything you will find in a bottle."

Bayern Brewery in Missoula is looking through a different glass during the pandemic. Rather than packaging primarily through cans and shifting sales outside the taproom, Bayern has been slinging glass six-packs and distributing their beer mostly through bars and off-premise for 30-some years.

"We have not seen anything negative where we couldn't produce," Masterbrewer Thorsten Geuer said Thursday. The business has a program for customers to return glass bottles to be recycled at the brewery, "so our access to glass is wider than having one supplier," Geuer said.

Still, Bayern packages part of its output in cans, and Geuer is aware of the possible shortage of aluminum. While gearing up to can their winter seasonals, Geuer said their supplier keeps cans on "allocation" for its customers.

As a smaller operation than a soda or large-scale beer company, Bayern's manufacturing center has to run for a only few hours to produce what the company needs. That's compared to some of the larger players, Geuer said, which can take up a manufacturer's operations for days at a time. He finds comfort in knowing Bayern's orders don't require much of the suppliers, with whom the brewery has long-term deals that have turned out to be long lasting relationships.

"Even though we are small, usually we can count on them," he said.

Going mobile

Mohr has canned his products in the past through Montana Canning Co., a mobile canning operation based in Livingston. The company has since sold the canning line.

Travis Peterson, who founded Meadowlark Brewing in Sidney, Montana, in 2014, was the first customer of Montana Canning. They utilized the company from 2015 until they purchased their canning line from Codi Manufacturing in Colorado in 2019. Prior to that, Peterson was bottling beer.

"Instead of canning, we bought a bottling line, which in retrospect we should have just ponied up and bought the canning line," said Peterson, who is in process of developing a 30-barrel production facility and taproom in West Billings.

"At the time, bottles were very popular and there was still a stigma of craft beer in aluminum. In the last couple years that dissipated, and then people saw a lot of flexibility in canning lines."

Because of the public's preference of cans, Peterson doesn't see viability in returning to bottles for six-packs, but still utilizes the bottling line for higher-end beers. He sources aluminum cans from several different suppliers, including Can Source, which obtains cans directly from Ball and earlier this week notified Peterson that there would be additional lead time required on orders of aluminum cans.

"Everything I've seen so far is doubling in lead time, which is really hard for small brewers to adjust to," he said.

Steep competition

At last count, Montana was nearing 100 small breweries and ranks third for breweries per capita in the nation. Montana brewers produced 218,547 barrels of craft beer in 2019, enough for 8.5 gallons of beer for every adult aged 21 or older, according to the Brewer's Association.

"The competition between all the brewers was getting rough, even before COVID," said Mohr of Angry Hank's. "If you go to any grocery store and look at the beer shelf, you almost blow your mind trying to make a decision."

Canning his product will help Mohr grab back some of the lost business from the taproom. "We have a huge market share in Billings. Hopefully, we can capture a big part of that can market."

At the Hank's taproom, Mohr has kept his pints priced at \$3. "Beer is a volume game," he said. "The more you can put out, the cheaper you can make it. Because we make it right here, and make a lot of it, there is no middle man. You are on premise, so there is no cost to us, besides paying bartenders."

Hastings and crew at Überbrew have their sights set on distributing the brand across Montana, hoping for 3,500 barrels this year. The sister brewery, BAM, is still in its infancy, distributed only in Billings at this point.

"We are brand new, and we want to have recipes dialed in before we get too far out there with it," Hastings said. "We are taking our time."

Peterson, of Meadowlark Brewing, said the expansion project in Billings is still moving forward, despite uncertainty in COVID-19 times.

"We don't want to be entirely dependent on one revenue stream, and we don't want to be entirely dependent on the public and on premise consumption, and we don't want to be entirely dependent on distribution sales," said Peterson. "We are trying to diversify what we can do and find some ground that's successful."

LICENSE NEWS

NY: Fingerprint, eye scan to buy booze, cigs is proposed

Observer

By John Whittaker, Managing Editor

August 3, 2020

Democrats hope the third time is a charm to pass a state law using biometrics — like a fingerprint — for proof to buy cigarettes or alcohol.

Assemblywoman Latrice Walker, D-Brooklyn, recently introduced A.10871 to amend the state's Alcoholic Beverage Control Law and Public Health Law to authorize use of "biometric identify verification devices." Devices could include fingerprints, iris images, facial images, according to the text of the legislation,

"Biometric age verification will help consumers and businesses by allowing people to enter their favorite establishments, or make alcohol or tobacco purchases quickly and without having to present photo identification, or even give their names and dates of birth," Walker wrote in her legislative justification. "The process and technology authorized by this legislation will simply indicate to an establishment whether the

customer is of sufficient age to enter the establishment or make the desired purchase. Biometric age verification technology is incredibly easy to use and highly accurate. The system identifies individuals and verifies their age using biometric information that is extremely difficult to alter or “fake,” such as a finger print. In fact, the technology, which is currently in use by the Transportation Security Administration, managed a 100% accurate verification rate.”

The legislation has never made it out of committee in prior years.

Its introduction this year conflicts with legislation the state Legislature passed less than two weeks ago banning the use of biometric identification technologies in schools until 2022 and roughly a month after the New York Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit against the state Education Department for allowing facial recognition technology to be used in Lockport City Schools last year. The ban on facial recognition software has not yet been signed by Gov. Andrew Cuomo.

Rep. Andrew Goodell, R-Jamestown, was among the 24 Assembly members to vote against the facial recognition legislation, A.6787D, making the case on the Assembly floor during a debate with Assembly member Monica Wallace, D-Erie County, that the matter is one for local school districts and voters to decide.

TX: What is the 51% rule and why are some businesses selling alcohol and some not?

Victoria Advocate
By Geoff Sloan
August 2, 2020

Q: What is the 51% rule and why are some businesses selling alcohol and some not?

A: So what about the local bar and grill restaurant or bar that sells food? Some businesses are closed and others aren't, and it depends on how much revenue comes from alcohol.

Gov. Greg Abbott closed bars for a second time by way of an executive order June 26. Since the statewide order, Texans “shall not visit bars or similar establishments.” But why are some restaurants still selling or delivering alcohol?

Part of the way the state differentiates between a bar and a restaurant that sells alcohol is by the percent of its gross receipts from the sale of alcoholic beverages. If the business's gross alcohol sales are 51% or higher, then patronizing the business in person is not allowed.

However, those businesses with gross sales 51% or higher may conduct business via drive-thru, pickup or delivery if they still hold a Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission consumer delivery permit except for Private Club Registration permits and Private Club Beer and Wine permits; and, off-site delivery for brewer's permits, manufacturer's licenses and distiller's and rectifier's permits.

Because of the specifics from the state about which businesses can legally sell alcohol right now and who cannot, the amount of money made from alcohol sales is how to find out if you can visit your favorite spot. If the word “bar” is in the name, you still might be able to go in person.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India: Liquor sales declined by half in states that imposed hefty corona cess: Beverage body

"The idea of various state governments to quickly make up for revenue deficit due to lockdown through heavy taxation on sale of liquor has backfired," the CIABC said on Sunday.

The News Minute
August 3, 2020

Liquor sales have declined more than half in states that imposed heavy corona cess to raise revenue, the Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Companies (CIABC) has said. "The idea of various state governments to quickly make up for revenue deficit due to lockdown through heavy taxation on sale of liquor has back-fired," the CIABC said in New Delhi on Sunday.

According to data collated by the CIABC, states that imposed no or moderate COVID taxes (0-15%) saw 16% sales decline. But the states that levied over 50% corona cess saw 59% sales fall.

Comparing May and June data, when liquor trade was reopened after six weeks of closure of liquor vends, the CIABC categorised states into three categories -- states that imposed corona cess up to 15%, those 15-50% and others over 50%.

CIABC Director General Vinod Giri said comparison of data for May and June with the year-ago months

alcohol sales in the first category states fell 16%, in the second 34% and in the third 59%.

"It shows tax increases most likely didn't lead to rise in collection in absolute terms. In fact, sales recovery in June, when unlocking began, was stronger in states that imposed lower cess," said Giri.

Alcohol, according to him, is not as price inelastic as many people think.

"While the governments' desire to collect more taxes is acknowledged and understood, they must not raise taxes beyond a point after which decline in sales and consumer down-trading to cheaper options more than nullify tax hikes," Giri said.

Tax hikes that pushed consumer price up 10-15% were counter-productive and caused fall in tax mop-up, he said and hoped the governments would take note of the data and bring tax hikes down to moderate and sustainable levels, ideally below 10%.

Kenya: Government Denies Banning Alcohol Sale in Wines and Spirits Joints

allAfrica

By Hilary Kimuyu

August 2, 2020

The government has denied that it has banned the sale of alcohol at wines and spirits after a purported gazette notice started circulating on social media.

In a statement from the Interior Ministry, the government urged the public to be aware of the fake notice.

"Beware of a fake gazette notice circulating, purporting to issue guidelines on the prohibition of sale of alcoholic drinks," the statement from the ministry reads.

Beware of a fake gazette notice circulating, purporting to issue guidelines on the prohibition of sale of alcoholic drinks. pic.twitter.com/n5FL2ofyoy

- Ministry of Interior (@InteriorKE) July 31, 2020

Last week President Uhuru Kenyatta banned sale of alcoholic beverages or drinks in eateries and restaurants and ordered restaurants to close by 7pm while bars to remain shut for 30 days.

"I hereby resolves and direct that there will be no sale of alcohol in eateries and bars effective midnight

today for 30 days within the territory of Kenya," President Kenyatta ordered in a televised address.

At the same time, the government said that individuals found drinking alcohol in bars and restaurants risk a Sh20,000 fine, a jail term of six months or both following the ban.

The penalties for breach of the presidential directive are contained in the Public Health (Prevention, Control and Suppression of Covid-19) Rules 2020 that were introduced in March to enforce restrictions imposed curb the spread of the coronavirus disease.

In his speech, President Kenyatta blamed the rise in Covid-19 cases on "reckless" behaviour and said there was notably an "aggressive surge" among young people who were socialising, "particularly in environments serving alcohol", and were, in turn, infecting their elders.

President Kenyatta, speaking moments after holding a meeting with county governors, also ordered for permanent withdrawal of licences of operators in breach of the alcohol ban.

The ban is a blow to bar owners who last week warned of losses amounting to Sh50 billion if fresh restrictions on sales were imposed.

The president asked the police to enforce the curfew rule regardless of who they found breaking it.

Nairobi Senator Johnson Sakaja recently quit his post as the chairman of the Senate committee overseeing the government's response to the coronavirus after he was arrested for flouting an overnight curfew to enjoy drinks with others in a Nairobi bar. He was later charged and fined.

Australia: Woolies liquor warehouse workers walk off the job after new virus case

The Sydney Morning Herald

By Ben Schneiders

August 3, 2020

Hundreds of workers at a Woolworths liquor distribution centre in Melbourne's west walked off the job after a worker tested positive to COVID-19.

Work stopped on Monday morning after a cease work notice was issued at the giant Laverton North distribution centre, which supplies alcohol to Dan Murphy's and other Woolworths chains.

Late on Monday the cease work was lifted after talks between the company and union and after the appointment of a hygienist to verify a cleaning of the site had met standards.

A Woolworths spokesman said the 11 hours of lost production would "inevitably" have some impact on stores. He said the stop work was unnecessary.

"All of the matters discussed with WorkSafe Victoria today could have easily been worked through with the health and safety representatives at the meeting we had scheduled for 6am this morning."

United Workers Union official Matt Toner earlier said they had to take action.

"We have seen this a dozen times already. Each time the company tries to downplay the virus and keep operating there's 50 or 60 COVID cases."

"The best plan Woolies can make is to go hard now and send all workers home with pay so they can be tested and do a proper deep clean."

A Woolworths spokesman said they learnt of the case on Friday afternoon and contacted the Department of Health and Human Services soon after.

The last shift of the affected worker was Tuesday July 28, the spokesman said.

The site remained open on Saturday, the day after the positive test, the spokesman said, "because we had taken all necessary steps as recommended by the DHHS in response to a positive COVID-19 event".

The Woolworths spokesman confirmed the opening of the centre on Monday had been delayed after a cease work notice was issued by the site's health and safety representative.

"The safety of our team is our priority and we're working through the notice with the UWU and WorkSafe Victoria as a matter of urgency," he said.

Premier Daniel Andrews and his most senior advisors have worked deep into the night finalising how businesses and workers will be affected by stage four, including enforced closures.

"We don't anticipate any material issues in our liquor supply to stores at this stage."

Mr Toner said Victorians are facing harsh restrictions and Woolworths "needs to respect the sacrifice we

are all making and treat this outbreak with the seriousness it deserves".

Mr Toner said the UWU had given Woolworths a list of demands on Saturday, including a 72-hour deep clean and that all current and soon-to-start workers and contractors be tested for the virus.

They also want an epidemiologist engaged to provide advice on management of the disease.

The union said the workers met on Monday morning and walked off the job after deciding Woolworths had not done enough.

PUBLIC HEALTH NEWS

New MMWR: 93,000 deaths each year due to excessive alcohol use in the U.S.

CDC

August 2, 2020

A new MMWR from the Alcohol Program in CDC's Division of Population Health reports that excessive alcohol use is responsible for more than 93,000 deaths in the US each year – or 255 deaths per day – shortening the lives of those who die by an average of 29 years. This study, which was the culmination of multi-year scientific and technical updates to the Alcohol-Related Disease Impact (ARDI) application, emphasizes the substantial public health impact of excessive drinking in the U.S.

According to the study, of all alcohol-attributable deaths:

- 55% were due to drinking too much over time, from causes such as various types of cancer, liver disease, and heart disease.
- 45% were due to drinking too much in a short period of time, from causes such as poisonings that involved another substance in addition to alcohol (e.g., drug overdoses), suicide, and motor vehicle crashes.
- More than 80% involved adults aged 35 years and older.
- More than 70% involved men.

Death rates due to excessive alcohol use varied across states, ranging from 20 deaths per 100,000 population in New York and New Jersey to 52 deaths per 100,000 population in New Mexico.

Implementation of effective strategies for preventing excessive drinking, such as those recommended by The Community Preventive Services Task Force (e.g., regulating the number and concentration of alcohol outlets), could reduce alcohol-attributable deaths and years of potential life lost.

The Alcohol-Related Disease Impact (ARDI) application allows users to generate estimates of alcohol-related deaths and years of potential life lost from 58 conditions by age, sex and state. Learn more about the updates made to the ARDI application.

We hope you will help to spread the word and share these findings with your partners and colleagues.

Suggested Social Media Language: Every day, an average of 255 people die from excessive alcohol use in the US. Learn more about deaths due to excessive drinking in the US and states: <https://bit.ly/2CU25v6>. #alcoholdeaths #bingedinking

You and your colleagues can subscribe to the “Alcohol Program” to receive our latest updates.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Nemiroff signs deal with Coca-Cola HBC in Austria

The Spirits Business

by Melita Kiely

August 3, 2020

Ukrainian vodka brand Nemiroff has agreed a distribution deal with Coca-Cola HBC in Austria.

Effective from September 2020, Coca-Cola HBC Austria will distribute Nemiroff De Luxe, Nemiroff De Luxe Honey Pepper and Nemiroff Lex Super Premium Vodka.

Nemiroff’s future plans for the partnership include developing cocktails and mixology programmes, along with educating consumers about responsible drinking.

Yuriy Sorochinskiy, CEO of Nemiroff Vodka, said: “We are delighted to add Austria to Nemiroff’s global presence map and pleased to be able to introduce our award-winning products to Austria’s consumers.

“Aligning with such a strong and experienced partner as Coca-Cola HBC, which shares a similar business philosophy and values, we are confident in stable further growth in this market.”

In March this year, Nemiroff signed an exclusive distribution deal with Coca-Cola HBC in Armenia.

Frank O’Donnell, general manager of Coca-Cola HBC Austria, commented on the new partnership: “The partnership with Nemiroff perfectly complements our approach to be a 24/7 beverage partner for our customers and offer our consumers the perfect drink for every taste and occasion.

“What unites Coca-Cola HBC Austria and Nemiroff is not only our sense for a broad and innovative portfolio, but also the uniqueness of the brand and the willingness to take the night gastronomy to new heights together.”

Nemiroff completed its virtual Nemiroff Cocktail Challenge in June, which featured more than 300 bartenders.

North Coast wineries grapple with proposed U.S. health guidelines to curb alcohol use for men

The Press Democrat

By Bill Swindell, The Press Democrat

August 2, 2020

In the midst of an already challenging year between the coronavirus and flattening sales, the U.S. wine sector was hit with a surprising blow last month that threatens to erect another obstacle to its growth into the future.

An expert panel revamping the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans called for a major change in alcohol consumption in the United States. Its July 15 report said men should limit themselves to one drink of alcohol per day, cutting in half the two-per-day standard for men that has been in place since 1990. Its recommendation for women, also one drink a day, remained unchanged.

The committee’s report referred to alcohol beverages as an overall “unhealthy substance” and warned the United States was “far from” consumption levels that would make a dent in the health-related problems caused by wine, beer or spirits.

“Alcohol can be consumed at low levels with relatively low risk, and is consumed by U.S. adults for a variety of reasons. However in terms of health, among those who consume alcohol, drinking less is better for health than drinking more,” the panel wrote in recommending the change.

Caught on the defensive, trade groups representing the wine, beer and spirits sectors are launching a counteroffensive questioning the science behind the

recent change. The Wine Institute, the wine industry's main lobbying group, based in San Francisco, said in a statement that "to change the long-established guidance on moderate consumption is not supported by science."

If the change is finalized in the new recommendations, it will likely translate to lower sales for wineries, said Rob McMillan, executive vice president of Silicon Valley Bank's wine division. The message on the new level for men — whether from health professionals or amplified in media reports — would likely result in a reduction of consumption.

"It's one more piece of ammunition to those who are anti-alcohol," McMillan said.

The change would likely be another challenge for Sonoma County wineries, which are adapting to increased consolidation and a massive drop in the consumption of wine in restaurants and bars closed under COVID-19. Many, including Martinelli Winery & Vineyards northwest of Santa Rosa, are also grappling with the effects of recent natural disasters.

"We have had fires and our vineyards on Martinelli Road were flooded (in 2019). We are family winery and we have seen it all the last couple of years," said Tessa Gorsuch, a fifth-generation member of the Martinelli wine family who serves as marketing director.

The battle over how much alcohol is enough for Americans to consume on a daily basis goes back decades. The debate has publicly played out during wrangling on the guidelines, which are published every five years as part of an effort by the federal departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services. The definition of one serving is a 12-ounce beer at 5% alcohol by volume (ABV), 5 ounces of wine at 12% ABV, or 1.5 ounces of a spirit at 40% of ABV.

Decades ago, the wine industry found an opening to promote the health benefits of its product in the aftermath of news reports on the French Paradox, research in the late 1980s that showed a Mediterranean diet accompanied by moderate drinking of red wine helped to curb heart disease. That was aided by research conducted by Dr. Arthur Klatsky, who was then a senior consultant in cardiology for Kaiser-Permanente Medical Center in Oakland, which found moderate drinkers had less risk of heart disease.

The wine sector prevailed in 1995 when the wording from 1990 recommendations that alcohol had "no net health benefit" was dropped from the guidelines. There was also inclusion in 1995 that moderate consumption could reduce the risk of coronary heart disease. In 2000, opponents of the industry, which included then-Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-South Carolina, sought to roll back such claims on the supposed health benefits of moderate drinking after the sector's victory five years earlier.

The language in the 2000 version was more nuanced. "Drinking in moderation may lower the risk for coronary heart disease, mainly among men over age 45 and women over age 55," it stated. But it added that moderate consumption provides "little, if any" benefit for younger people and that drinks should be taken with meals to slow absorption.

The recommendations had not changed that drastically for 20 years — until a few weeks ago.

Some like McMillan said they believe wine industry leaders rested too much on their laurels from years ago and didn't remain vigilant against those who kept questioning the health benefits of alcohol.

The guidelines on alcohol apply to all sectors of the beverage industry, but some in the wine industry contend that wine should be considered separately, based on the way it is consumed, and say their product has research from Klatsky to back up claims that moderate consumption can have beneficial effects.

David Ramey of Ramey Wine Cellars in Healdsburg noted that wine consumption is typically part of dining. He remembers his late UC Davis viticulture and enology professor Vernon Singleton saying that "wine is the beverage of moderation" and noted that wine is often sipped with meals rather than guzzled on its own.

"My problem with these anti-alcohol people is that what they are, they are anti-alcohol. They conflate beer, spirits and wine as just 'all alcohol' whereas I really think wine is special and different. It is a gift from God," Ramey said.

Opponents disagree and contend the sector has not kept up with evolving research that has showed more troubling signs. The committee noted observational studies found beneficial effects "of low average levels of consumption" in regards to heart disease. But at higher levels of drinking there was an increased risk of heart disease, especially among binge drinkers. The definition

for binge drinking for men is five drinks a day or 15 or more per week, according to the panel report.

The preliminary report stated that alcohol is recognized as a carcinogen by the World Health Organization and the U.S. government and it “is likely causally associated” with seven types of cancer and is responsible for up to 5.5% of all cancer deaths in the country. “Alcohol also is a risk factor for a range of gastrointestinal health outcomes, including chronic liver disease, pancreatitis, gastritis, gastro-esophageal reflux disease, and peptic ulcer disease,” the report said.

For example, opponents note that about 40% of alcohol-related deaths occur among those below the age of 50. Studies looking at the linkage between alcohol and heart disease in people from ages 50 to 70 would not consider those who have already died, said Carson Benowitz-Frederick, research manager for Alcohol Justice, a San Rafael-based advocacy group that calls for higher taxes and regulation of alcohol.

“A big chunk of people who in fact may have been killed from alcohol died before they even had the chance to make it into that cohort (group),” Benowitz-Frederick said.

In contrast, he contends that there have been more links reported between development of certain cancers — such as those in the breast and colon — and drinking, which would increase with more consumption.

“This been compounded by what has really emerged in the last 10 years and what is being taken into account here,” Benowitz-Frederick said of the panel’s report.

The wrangling over the science will continue. R. Curtis Ellison, a semi-retired professor of medicine and public health at Boston University’s School of Medicine who studied the effects of alcohol for years, labeled the panel report as “fake news” that didn’t properly consider prior research such as Klatsky’s work. In some of his past work, Ellison received donations from the alcohol-beverage industry but he said it had no control over the results of his research. He stopped such industry funding in 2013.

Ellison noted that he did not read the panel’s report but said “in my opinion there is no evidence that suggests we should change the guidelines.”

The lobbying is intensifying. On Wednesday, the Beer Institute sent an email blast to its members asking them to urge their representatives to sign onto a letter drafted by Rep. Andy Harris, R-Maryland. The Harris letter will ask top leaders at the Agriculture and HHS departments to review the process and evidence behind the committee’s recommendations to ensure the guidelines are backed by a preponderance of the scientific evidence. The Wine Institute will send its comments on the panel report by the Aug. 13 deadline for such submissions, a spokeswoman for the group said.

Ramey said he had been worried about such a rollback and raised the issue during a board retreat with the Sonoma County Vintners last summer. The nonprofit group has been looking into the issue, but the pandemic has delayed any public discussion, said Michael Haney, executive director of the Sonoma County Vintners.

“There is a rising tide of anti-alcohol out there,” Ramey said. “We got to take this seriously.”

DAILY NEWS

The One Alcohol That’s Down a Whopping \$2 Billion In Sales

MSN

by Amanda McDonald

August 2, 2020

When stay-at-home mandates were placed on states at the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, large gatherings halted. The virus spreads through the air from one person to another. So no one got together in groups of 10 or more, and restaurants closed their dining rooms. Many are still operating with limited capacities or only outdoor seating.

So because weddings, parties, and other events were postponed or canceled recently, the Champagne industry in France has lost about \$2 billion in sales this year, according to the Associated Press.

“Champagne has never lived through anything like this before, even in the World Wars,” Anselme Selosse, part of Jacques Selosse Champagnes, told the news outlet. “We have never experienced ... a sudden one-third fall in sales. Over one hundred million bottles unsold.”

The abrupt loss in sales could mean a rebranding of the drink is coming to get people to see it differently. Champagne, like sauvignon blanc, chardonnay, merlot, and others, doesn’t contain more than about 2 to 4

grams of carbs. This makes it a great option to sip on if you're looking for ways to lose weight. FYI, for the best low-carb option, go with the drier Extra Brut Champagne, which only has about 1 gram. In addition, it is made without any extra sugar and many times, organically.

Still, this year's champagne sales losses could force the industry in France to move toward other winemaking.

"Even if the bars and the nightclubs are closed for five years, we don't plan on missing out on customers ... There will be a very big change to our marketing that highlights the grandeur of our wines," Paul-Francois Vranken, the founder of Vranken-Pommery Monopole, told the AP. "It should not be forgotten that (champagne) has lived through every single war...But with the other crises, there was a way out. For now, there is no way out — unless we find a vaccine."

If you're craving a glass of something bubbly — don't rule out the champagne. Here are The Best Champagnes for Under \$20.

Plane travel and coronavirus: US passengers are (illegally) bringing their own alcohol on board

Traveller

By Dawn Gilbertson

August 3, 2020

Airline passengers have long tucked those miniature bottles of booze into their carry-on bags or filled a to-go cup with cocktails so they don't ring up an in-flight bar tab, federal regulations against it be damned.

The practice has spiked during the pandemic, but for a different reason: most airlines aren't serving alcoholic beverages in the name of limiting contact between flight attendants and passengers.

And at least one airline is fed up.

Southwest Airlines, responding to an increase in reports from flight attendants about passengers consuming their own alcoholic beverages on the plane, is permanently adding a new line to its in-flight safety announcements, according to a memo sent to flight attendants Thursday by Kari Kriesel, Southwest's manager of inflight safety, standards and regulatory compliance.

The gist: you can't BYOB. Well, you can bring it, but you can't drink it on the plane.

After passengers are reminded about no smoking, using electronic cigarettes or tampering with the smoke detector in the lavatory, flight attendants will announce: "It is also prohibited to consume alcohol that you've brought."

Kriesel's memo attributed the increase in passengers bringing their own alcoholic drinks on board to the lack of in-flight drink sales and availability of alcohol in airports during the pandemic. Southwest is only serving passengers a cup of water and a package of snack mix.

She said most airlines are "noticing the same challenges."

American Airlines has seen an increase in incidents, too, spokesman Ross Feinstein said.

Southwest seemed to give most passengers the benefit of the doubt, suggesting they might not be aware of the policy rather than flaunting it.

"While there is information on Southwest.com and announcements are made in the gate area, some customers may not know about this regulation that prohibits them from consuming their own alcohol," Kriesel said in the memo.

What happens to passengers caught with their own drinks? Southwest told its flight attendants to "use their hospitality" to explain the policy and ask the passenger to discard the beverage.

"Refrain from confiscating sealed containers, and allow customers to stow those for the remainder of the flight," the memo said.

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