



Advocating for evidence-based policies and practices
to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms.

OMAHA COALITION MEETING
Wednesday, September 11, 2024
9 a.m.

Please use to sign-in:



AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Review of the August 14, 2024 Meeting Minutes
(please contact PEM staff with corrections)
- III. Suicide Prevention Month
Molly Woodman, Kim Foundation
- IV. Focus Area Updates
 - a. Local
 - i. Mega Saver
 - b. Policy
 - i. Special Session & LR 353
 - ii. Alcohol Action Network
 - c. Youth
 - i. Leadership Network – Next meeting: September 16th at 7-8 pm
 - d. Awareness
 - i. September Research Summary available at www.projectextramile.org
- V. Additional Discussion/Announcements
- VI. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date: **October 9th, 9 a.m. Lancaster Co. DUI Court**
UNO's Community Engagement Center, Room 209

IMPORTANT UPCOMING EVENTS

Youth Leadership Network Meeting – September 16, 2024 at 7-8 pm
Nebraska Liquor Control Commission Hearings – October 8, 2024

PROJECT EXTRA MILE

OMAHA METRO AREA COALITION MEETING MINUTES

August 14, 2024

- I. Call to Order: Chris Wagner called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.
- II. Welcome and Introductions: Coalition members and speakers in attendance: Sharona Ernst, Derek Schwartz, Ryan Wiesen, Matt Kuhse, Janine Fell, Tom Safranek, Margie Magnuson, Chris Foster, Russ Zeeb, Cody McGee, Jason Sharp, and Heike Langdon. Coalition members in attendance via Zoom: Whitney Abbott, Meaghan Wade, Elizabeth Woods, and Maggie Ballard. Staff members: Chris Wagner and Beatha Kliever.
- III. Approval of Minutes: The minutes from the June 12th meeting were included in the coalition meeting packet. No additions or corrections were made.
- IV. City Efforts to Prevent Alcohol-Related Harms: Omaha City Attorney Matt Kuhse talked about the city's new disorderly premise ordinance and how it could be a tool against excessive alcohol consumption and its harms across the city at both businesses that sell alcohol as well as private residences that host parties involving alcohol. Matt emphasized that this is a criminal ordinance and requires a "beyond a reasonable doubt" evidentiary standard. He also cautioned that the ordinance requires a pattern of violations before it can be utilized. Margie Magnuson questioned why the city needed a new ordinance that looks very similar to the Good Neighbor Ordinance that the neighbors worked so hard to get passed. Ryan Wiesen shared that one of the problems with the Good Neighbor Ordinance was the 30-day clock for the business to clean up its act. If they did that, everything would reset. The disorderly premise ordinance instead has a 18-month window. It's also a criminal ordinance that doesn't involve what someone could argue as the subjective decision of the planning department.
- V. Focus Area Updates
 - a. Local
 - i. Chris Wagner shared that PEM testified in opposition of the Mega Saver application at 72nd and Dodge based on the corporate applicant's history of sales to minors across its multiple locations.
 - ii. Wagner also mentioned that L St. Lounge had a formal hearing for a disturbance that had to be reduced to a mandatory meeting because the officer was unable to attend the hearing.
 - iii. Margie Magnuson shared that Weini's Mart was denied at the city council because it wouldn't agree to restrictions, but that the LCC recently granted the license with those restrictions.
 - b. Enforcement
 - i. Wagner shared that Douglas & Cass County compliance check operations were conducted during the summer. The results of the enforcement effort are included in the packet.
 - ii. Wagner mentioned that the organization continues to advocate for focusing on our state's binge drinking problem. One way that we could do that would be to conduct checks at licensed locations to ensure that

businesses are not serving visibly intoxicated persons. Toward that end, the organization is working with the National Liquor Law Enforcement Association to touch on this topic during an upcoming law enforcement training.

- c. Policy
 - i. Wagner shared that an excise tax increase on distilled spirits has been included in bills as a part of the special legislative session focused on providing property tax relief. Unfortunately, the last compromise proposal would actually cut spirits taxes by \$1 per gallon for all Nebraska producers while increasing the tax for those businesses that produce over 100,000 gallons per year to \$7 per gallon.
 - ii. Wagner noted that due to the ongoing special legislative session, the General Affairs Committee has cancelled the interim study hearing on alcohol pricing and taxation that was scheduled to occur on August 17th.
 - d. Youth
 - i. Janine Fell shared that the Youth Leadership Retreat took place in June and was a valuable experience. Youth learned about the importance of mental health, the harms of alcohol, and how to advocate for policy change.
 - e. Awareness
 - i. The July & August Research Summaries are available at www.projectextramile.org/ResearchSummary
- VI. Additional Discussion/Announcements: none
- VII. Adjournment and Next Meeting Date: The meeting was adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Alcohol Use and Suicide

Examining the Link & Solutions

Suicide is a major public health issue facing multiple generations not only in Nebraska but across the entire nation. Nebraska suicide rates have spiked above the national average in recent years and evidence-based, environmental alcohol strategies are needed to help reduce these rates and prevent suicides.

Excessive Alcohol Use is a Key Risk Factor for Suicide

Suicide is a complex issue with many contributing factors and alcohol use has been identified as a key risk behavior for suicidal completion. Excessive alcohol consumption can cause a decrease in cognitive capacity, which may result in difficulty considering alternative problem-solving solutions.¹ Alcohol is the top substance used among drug-related suicide attempts that end up in the emergency department, alcoholism is a factor in approximately 30% of completed suicides, and approximately 7% of those with alcohol dependence will die by suicide.²

Research has shown that a greater alcohol outlet density (having a high concentration of alcohol retailers in a small area) is linked to increased alcohol-related suicide rates within a community.³ As a result, it's important to not only focus on individuals when working to prevent suicide, but also to address environmental factors that can influence how individuals consume alcohol which can impact how those with mental health issues think and act.

Suicide Prevalence in the U.S. and Nebraska

- In 2021, it was the second leading cause of death among those 10-14 and 25-34 years old and the third leading cause of death among 15–24-year-olds.⁴
- A death by suicide occurs approximately every 11 minutes.⁵
- 37% of suicides and 40% of suicide attempts are preceded by the acute use of alcohol.⁶ 2003-2011 data showed that 36% of males and 28% of females who died by suicide tested positive for alcohol.⁷
- Suicide attempts and death by suicide cost the U.S. nearly \$490 billion annually in medical and work loss costs, value of statistical life, and quality of life costs.⁸
- In Nebraska, suicide was the eleventh leading cause of death in 2021, with an overall rate of 15.07 per 100,000 people, exceeding the overall national rate of 14.04 per 100,000 people.
 - Suicide was the second leading cause of death among those 10-34 years of age.⁹
 - Between 2020-2021, 20% of suicides in Nebraska involved alcohol annually.¹⁰

¹ Wasserman, 2016

² Ali et al., 2013

³ Giesbrecht et al., 2015

⁴ CDC, 2022

⁵ CDC, 2024

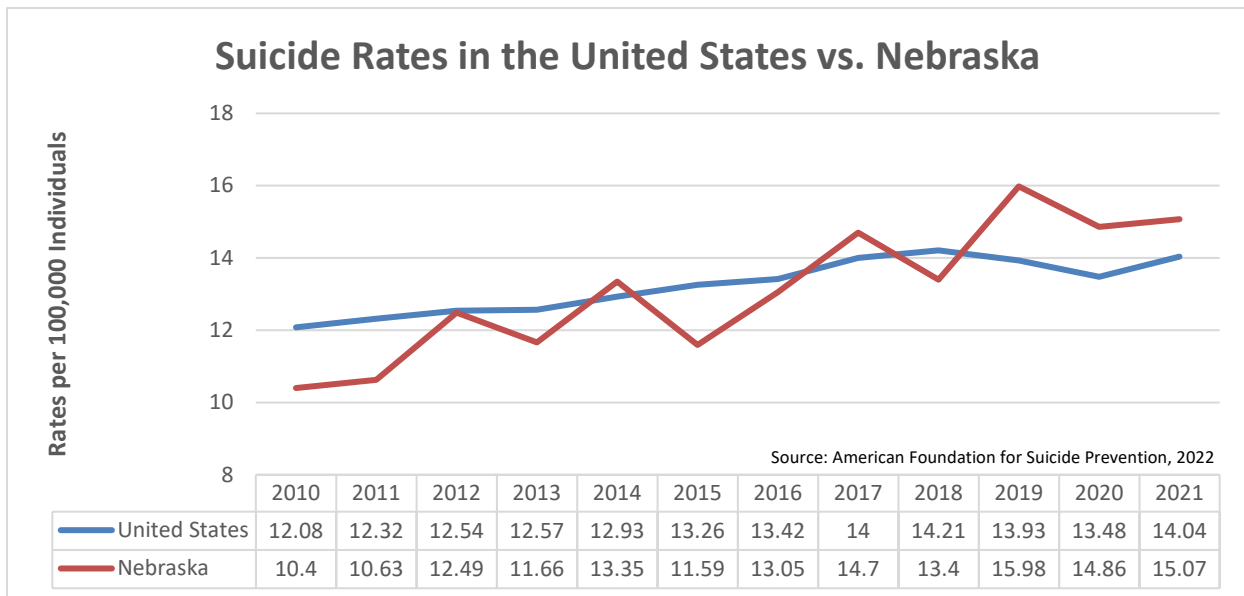
⁶ Cherpitel et al., 2004

⁷ Kaplan et al., 2014

⁸ Peterson et al., 2021

⁹ AFSP, 2022

¹⁰ CDC ARDI, 2022



Vulnerable Populations

It is imperative to understand that not all populations are impacted by suicide in the same manner. Vulnerable populations include, but are not limited to, veterans and military personnel, American Indians and Alaska Natives, and the LGBTQ population.

A 2016 study found that 6% of soldiers reported suicidal thoughts and behaviors within the past year. Those who indicated the highest levels of alcohol use were most likely to have seriously considered and/or attempted suicide.¹¹

Since 2003, suicide rates have been increasing among the American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) population. A 2018 report stated that in 2015 suicide rates were 3.5 times higher among AI/AN populations at 21.5 per 100,000, than among racial/ethnic groups with the lowest rates. More than one-third (35.7%) of AI/AN individuals who died by suicide were aged 10-24 years and were 2.1 times more likely to have a positive alcohol toxicology result. Of the 846 participants that were tested for alcohol, 54% of them tested positive for the presence of alcohol in their bloodstream.¹²

Sexual minorities, particularly those with a substance use disorder, often have additional psychiatric disorders. While research is limited, transgender children and adolescents have reported higher levels of depression, suicidality, self-harm, and eating disorders than their non-transgender counterparts.¹³

Solutions

- **Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)** is an intervention which may be used to prevent and reduce excessive alcohol consumption as well as mental health problems in a clinical setting that can help individuals identify and treat both mental health and substance misuse problems before they become more serious for the individual and increase the risk of harms in the community.¹⁴
- Access to alcohol should be limited, at both the individual and societal levels.¹⁵ The World Health Organization¹⁶ has identified evidence-based strategies which can be used to reduce both access and exposure to alcohol, which can reduce and prevent alcohol-related harms including suicide.

¹¹ Herberman et al., 2016

¹² Leavitt et al., 2018

¹³ Connolly et al., 2016

¹⁴ SAMHSA, 2017

¹⁵ Wasserman, 2016

¹⁶ WHO, 2011

- **Limiting alcohol availability.** Physical availability refers to the accessibility or convenience of obtaining and consuming these products. Research shows that when alcohol is too readily available the negative effects pile up. Ways to limit alcohol availability include maintaining limits on the days and hours that alcohol can be sold, regulating alcohol outlet density and maintaining the minimum legal drinking age. Nebraska law allows local governing bodies to regulate alcohol outlets through land use and zoning powers. The City of Omaha has seized on this ability in passing its “Good Neighbor Ordinance” (Ord. 39471) that can offer an alternative process for addressing outlets that drain the city’s enforcement resources and reduce the quality of life in neighborhoods. Other Nebraskan cities and counties could pass similar measures.
- **Reducing exposure to alcohol advertising.** Numerous long-term studies have found that the more young people are exposed to alcohol advertising, the more likely they are to begin drinking or, if already drinking, to drink more. Alcohol advertising and marketing have a significant impact on youth and adult decisions to drink by influencing expectations and attitudes and helping to create an environment that glamorizes alcohol consumption.
- **Increasing alcohol taxes.** Although excise taxes are often raised for revenue-generating reasons, numerous studies have found that higher alcohol taxes also have a significant impact on excessive consumption and its related harms. Alcohol taxes have not been increased in Nebraska since 2003, rather there have been multiple efforts to seek lower rates for things like alcopops and ready-to-drink cocktails.

References

- Ali, S., Nathani, M., Jabeen, S., Yazdani, I., Mouton, C. D., Bailey, R. K., ... & Riley, W. J. (2013). Alcohol: the lubricant to suicidality. *Innovations in clinical neuroscience*, 10(1), 20.
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). (n.d.). Preventing suicide in LGBTQ communities. Retrieved October 17, 2022 from <https://afsp.org/preventing-suicide-in-lgbtq-communities>
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP). (2022). Suicide Data: Nebraska. Retrieved June 24, 2024 from <https://afsp.org/facts/nebraska>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2022). 10 Leading Causes of Death – 2021. Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) [Online]. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, CDC (producer). Retrieved June 24, 2024 from <https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/LeadingCauses.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2022). Alcohol-Related Disease Impact Application (ARDI). Retrieved October 19, 2022 from https://nccd.cdc.gov/DPH_ARDI/default/default.aspx
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). (2024). Facts About Suicide. Retrieved June 24, 2024 from <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/facts/index.html>
- Cherpitel, C. J., Borges, G. L., & Wilcox, H. C. (2004). Acute alcohol use and suicidal behavior: a review of the literature. *Alcoholism: clinical and experimental research*, 28, 18S-28S.
- Connolly, M. D., Zervos, M. J., Barone II, C. J., Johnson, C. C., & Joseph, C. L. (2016). The mental health of transgender youth: Advances in understanding. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 59(5), 489-495.
- Giesbrecht, N., Huguet, N., Ogden, L., Kaplan, M. S., McFarland, B. H., Caetano, R., ... & Nolte, K. B. (2015). Acute alcohol use among suicide decedents in 14 US states: impacts of off-premise and on-premise alcohol outlet density. *Addiction*, 110(2), 300-307.
- Herberman Mash, H. B., Fullerton, C. S., Ng, T. H. H., Nock, M. K., Wynn, G. H., & Ursano, R. J. (2016). Alcohol use and reasons for drinking as risk factors for suicidal behavior in the US Army. *Military medicine*, 181(8), 811-820.
- Kaplan, M. S., Huguet, N., McFarland, B. H., Caetano, R., Conner, K. R., Giesbrecht, N., & Nolte, K. B. (2014). Use of alcohol before suicide in the United States. *Annals of epidemiology*, 24(8), 588-592.
- Leavitt, R. A., Ertl, A., Sheats, K., Petrosky, E., Ivey-Stephenson, A., & Fowler, K. A. (2018). Suicides among American Indian/Alaska Natives—National violent death reporting system, 18 states, 2003–2014. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 67(8), 237.
- Omaha, NE., Article IX. – Alcohol Sales Locations – Ordinance 39471. Retrieved October 19, 2022 from https://library.municode.com/ne/omaha/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodel=PTIIMUCO_CH18NU_ARTIXALSALO
- Peterson, C., Miller, G. F., Barnett, S. B. L., & Florence, C. (2021). Economic cost of injury—United States, 2019. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 70(48), 1655.
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). (2017). About Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT). Available at <https://www.samhsa.gov/sbirt/about>
- Wasserman, D. (2016). *Suicide: an unnecessary death*. Oxford University Press.
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2011). From burden to “best buys”: Reducing the economic impact of non-communicable diseases in low- and middle-income countries. Available at https://ncdalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource_files/WHO%20From%20Burden%20to%20Best%20Buys.pdf

Contact Information

Project Extra Mile
6001 Dodge Street, CEC 228B
Omaha, NE 68182-0600
Ph: (402) 963-9047
Email: info@projectextramile.org

YOUTH LEADERSHIP NETWORK

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. ADVOCACY. AWARENESS. ACTION

READY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?



Youth in grades 8-12 in the Omaha Metro Area are invited to join Project Extra Mile's Youth Leadership Network. Members will learn about the harms of excessive alcohol use in our community, develop the leadership skills needed to make real change, and put those skills into action!

FOCUSING ON EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO LEAD



Project Extra Mile has been creating community change for over 25 years and we are passionate about reducing alcohol-related harms in our community. In the Youth Leadership Network, we focus on teaching and practicing the skills needed to create change. Youth will receive expert guidance on projects that will utilize media literacy, public speaking, advocacy, problem-solving, and community organizing skills that they'll develop from this initiative.

A YOUTH-LED APPROACH



We're serious about youth leadership, which is why all projects are planned and developed by the youth themselves. Youth projects over the last couple years have included hosting a town hall, meeting with state senators, creating media campaigns to raise awareness, and more!

MEET AND LEARN FROM LOCAL AND STATE POLICYMAKERS

CREATE YOUR OWN MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

LEARN HOW TO USE YOUR INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP STYLE

MEET NEW FRIENDS AND DEVELOP SKILLS TO LAST A LIFETIME





GROW YOUR LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND MAKE FRIENDSHIPS THAT LAST A LIFETIME

YOUTH LEADERSHIP NETWORK FALL MEETING SCHEDULE

**AUGUST 12, 2024
7-8 P.M.
UNO CEC**

**SEPTEMBER 16, 2024
7-8 P.M.
UNO CEC**

**OCTOBER 21, 2024
7-8 P.M.
UNO CEC**

**NOVEMBER 18, 2024
7-8 P.M.
UNO CEC**

**DECEMBER 16, 2024
7-8 P.M.
UNO CEC**

**EXTRA MEETINGS
AS NEEDED**

**YOUTH ADVOCACY DAY
AT THE STATE CAPITOL
SPRING 2025**

**YOUTH LEADERSHIP
TRAINING
JUNE 2025**

**RECOGNITION DINNER
FALL 2025**

HOW TO JOIN

The Youth Leadership Network is open to all Omaha-area youth in grades 8 through 12 who want to grow as leaders and are interested in preventing alcohol-related harms in our community with the skills they develop. To indicate your interest in joining us for our next meeting, please fill out the form using the QR code below. YLN is completely free to join!



Register here!

WHERE WE MEET

The Youth Leadership Network meetings are held once a month at the Barbara Weitz Community Engagement Center (CEC) on the University of Nebraska-Omaha campus at 6400 Dodge Street, Omaha, NE. Parking is free and food and drinks are provided at each meeting (must register for food).

LEARN MORE!

To learn more about the Youth Leadership Network, please visit www.projectextramile.org/youth or contact us at youth@projectextramile.org or (402) 963-9047

Find us on:



RESEARCH SUMMARY
Date Compiled: September 2024

Key takeaways from included research:

- A new study examined ‘sweetspot’ policy options with the potential to benefit public services and health while avoiding or minimizing negatives impacts on the hospitality industry. They determined interventions that increase the price of alcohol as promising; restrictions of online sales may reduce harms and divert consumption from on-premise to at home settings; reducing late-night hours of sale saw little impact on the hospitality industry. Overall, evidence in this study and others show that regulating the price and online sales have the greatest potential to be ‘sweetspot’ alcohol policies to reduce harms while minimizing impacts on the hospitality industry.
- Young adults are more likely to utilize social media, and the alcohol industry has been utilizing social media to target potential customers, a new study examined the prevalence and factors associated with past-month exposure to social media marketing (SMM) among a group of young Chinese adults. They found that 52.3% of respondents reported past-month exposure to SMM. Direct alcohol SMM (business-to-consumer) was reported by 40.9% while 27.4% reported indirect SMM (shared/liked posts). Researchers concluded that the pervasiveness of alcohol SMM and the lack of alcohol SMM policies indicate greater needs for alcohol marketing regulations.
- A new study examined how young adults perceive drinking-related consequences and what factors may influence their evaluations. Young adults 21+ experienced fewer total consequences and were significantly less likely to endorse experiencing physical/behavioral consequences and rated them ore negatively, as compared to young adults 18-20 years of age. Those who drank weekly or more were significantly more likely to experience all consequences compared to those who drank three times per month or less. Researchers highlighted that identifying the different factors contributing to young adult evaluations may be useful in tailoring brief and personalized interventions.
- Researchers examined polysubstance use and how its associated with adverse health outcomes. While estimating trends in marijuana and heavy alcohol use by cigarette smoking, they found a decrease in heavy alcohol use (7.8% to 6.4%), an increase in marijuana use (6.0% to 11.8%), and concurrent use remained stable. They also examined demographic subgroups and found higher education was associated with higher odds of heavy alcohol use.

Arrests, deaths due to drunk driving on the rise in Nebraska

Written by Bella Caracta

OMAHA, Neb. (WOWT) - Driving under the influence has consequences — deadly ones.

“He took my mom’s life needlessly,” said Toby Antonson, whose mom was killed by a drunk driver. “It’s very tough the pain that he caused.”

They’re consequences that his family has to live with.

Latest numbers from the Nebraska State Patrol show troopers made more than 800 arrests so far this year, which is a whopping 23% increase compared to this time last year.

“Each one of those DUI arrests is a potential life saver,” said Colonel John Bolduc, superintendent of NSP.

Fatalities are up as well; NSP reported a 26% increase compared to this time last year.

“If you’re going to drink at all, just don’t drive. It’s as simple as that,” said Bolduc.

Project Extra Mile is an organization in the metro that works to address excessive drinking. 6 News spoke with the executive director about what may help explain this trend and why Nebraska sticks out compared to other states.

“It’s our policies, so we don’t have great policies,” said Chris Wagner. “Having cheap alcohol, having alcohol available everywhere you go.”

Though it may seem its like that everywhere, most states don’t allow all kinds of alcohol, including liquor, to be sold in grocery stores. Nebraska does.

About 20 states restrict the number of liquor licenses. Nebraska doesn’t.

Some states prohibit “happy hour,” which offers discounted drinks in the timeframe between after work and before dinner, to discourage excessive drinking. Nebraska doesn’t.

Both NSP and Project Extra Mile stress personal accountability, but Wagner in particular calls upon the state legislature to consider a balance between economic development and public safety.

Nebraska retracts 287% spirits tax hike plan

Written by Nicola Carruthers

A proposed spirits tax increase of 287% in Nebraska will not go ahead after more than 1,500 letters were sent to lawmakers.

Nebraska governor Jim Pillen was considering providing property tax relief by increasing excise taxes on a list of 100 everyday goods and services, including a triple-digit hike on spirits.

Pillen was planning to raise the current excise tax rate for spirits from US\$3.75 per gallon to US\$14.50 per gallon.

However, the tax increase is no longer being considered following a grassroots activation by trade group the Distilled Spirits Council of the US (Discus) and coordination with local distillers and wholesale partners.

More than 1,500 letters were sent to legislators through Discus' Spirits United campaign, which called on consumers and industry members to write to their senator to oppose the tax increases.

"Defeating this tax threat is a huge win for consumers, distillers and the hospitality industry," said Adam Smith, vice president of state government relations at Discus.

"We've seen in other states how high taxes send consumers across the border as they search for better prices. However well-intentioned, this hospitality tax would have harmed local businesses and Nebraska consumers. We are grateful to the legislature for removing this increase from consideration."

If the tax hike had proceeded, Discus said approximately 1,350 people would lose their jobs because of a more than US\$110 million decline in retail alcohol sales, based on analysis by the trade body.

Furthermore, the new rate would have established Nebraska as the second-highest spirits tax rate among licensed US states.

The state already pays a high rate of tax on spirits. On a typical bottle purchased in the state, more than 44% of the retail cost already goes to pay a tax or fee of some kind.

How Alcohol Can Harm Those Not Drinking

Written by Omer Awan

Alcohol can harm those not drinking more than it harms those that do drink, according to a New Zealand study published recently in *Addiction*.

The study examined data from New Zealand hospitalization records as well as survey data to estimate number of years of healthy life lost due to either living with disability or premature deaths. According to the study, 78,277 healthy life years were lost in New Zealand in the year 2018. Over 90% of lost years was due to fetal alcohol spectrum disorder, followed by 6.3% due to traffic crashes and 3.4% due to interpersonal violence.

Importantly, 18,000 more healthy life years were lost in those that did not drink compared to those that actually drank alcohol according to the study. Most research done on alcohol centers on the deleterious effects on those that do drink, but the aforementioned study sheds light on how alcohol can detrimentally affect even those that do not drink but are directly or indirectly affected by those that do drink.

It is well known that alcohol can harm one's health and that no amount of alcohol is safe for an individual. Alcohol has no health benefits, according to the American Public Health Association. For those that do drink, long term effects of alcohol can lead to high blood pressure, heart disease, liver disease, weakening of the immune system and mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety according to the CDC. Alcohol is also associated with a number of cancers including but not limited to the breast, mouth, colon, liver and rectum.

The effects of alcohol on those not drinking can be more profound than the ones that occur in drinkers. Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, which were responsible for the vast majority of healthy life years lost in the aforementioned study published in *Addiction*, represent a group of conditions that can occur in an individual exposed to alcohol by their mother before birth.

A child with FASD may have a small head, shorter than average height, low birth weight, poor memory and coordination, difficulty paying attention, speech and language delays, vision and hearing problems as well as problems with the heart and kidneys to name several symptoms. Children live with this condition for a lifetime, as there currently is no cure. The American Academy of Pediatrics estimates that 40,000 babies in America are born each year with FASD, and all 40,000 cases of FASD could be entirely prevented through alcohol abstinence.

Alcohol-induced traffic injuries also pose a significant threat to life. Every day, 37 people in the United States die from drunk-driving crashes, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Interpersonal violence can also be a devastating consequence of alcohol for those that don't drink. This includes sexual assault, intimate partner violence, homicide and suicides. An estimated 88,000 Americans die each year from alcohol-related interpersonal violence, according to American Addiction Centers.

Alcohol is literally crippling American society, and remains a leading cause of preventable death in the United States. No amount of alcohol is beneficial, for an individual or for those around them. Given the public health effects of alcohol on both the individual and society, perhaps it's time for everyone to re-evaluate their relationship with the drug that kills 3 million people worldwide each year.

Alcohol played a part in 2.6 million deaths in 2019, WHO says

Written by Hannah Docter-Loeb

Alcohol consumption played a role in 2.6 million deaths worldwide in 2019, according to a report from the World Health Organization.

The report analyzed alcohol and psychoactive drug usage in 2019 across 145 countries. While rates of alcohol-related deaths had decreased since 2010, the overall number is still “unacceptably high,” WHO officials said in the report released in June. Deaths linked to alcohol consumption made up about 4.7 percent of all deaths worldwide.

Young people ages 20 to 39 and individuals in Europe and Africa made up the largest proportion of alcohol-attributable deaths, and more men than women — 2 million vs. 0.6 million — died because of alcohol, according to the report.

Globally, nearly a quarter of all 15- to 19-year-olds drank alcohol, the WHO report said. Rates of drinking were highest in the European and African regions, the WHO said, and 38 percent of drinkers reported heavy episodic drinking on one or more occasions in the preceding month.

According to the report, 400 million people globally have alcohol use disorders, and of these, 209 million had alcohol dependence. But the authors wrote that high-quality, ethical treatment for substance use disorders is lacking. Most of the countries assessed did not have a specific budget line or data on governmental expenditures for treatment. And almost half of the countries analyzed did not offer support groups for substance use disorders.

“Stigma, discrimination and misconceptions about the efficacy of treatment contribute to these critical gaps in treatment provision, as well as the continued low prioritization of substance use disorders by health and development agencies,” the authors write.

Alcohol believed to be a factor in Lancaster County rollover crash, sheriff's office says

Written by 1011 NOW Staff

LINCOLN, Neb. (KOLN) - The Lancaster County Sheriff's Office is investigating a single-vehicle rollover crash in southern Lancaster County Thursday evening.

Deputies and Hickman Rural Fire and Rescue responded to the crash in the area of South 54th Street and Bennet Road just after 6:10 p.m.

LSO said a male truck driver had lost control of the fuel truck and landed in a ditch. The driver suffered minor injuries in the crash.

The investigation is ongoing but LSO believes the alcohol played a factor in the crash.

The Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department's HazMat team was on scene assisting in cleanup efforts after the crash. A 10/11 reporter on scene said two skid-steer loaders were digging up soil and putting it in a dump truck.

Stay with 1011now.com for updates on this developing story.

Nebraska the only Big Ten school that doesn't sell beer at football games — for now

Written by Chris Dunker

When it comes to the sale of beer, wine and spirits at Big Ten football stadiums, a familiar refrain rings true.

There is no place like Nebraska.

This fall, with beer sales set to begin at the University of Michigan and the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the addition of four new schools to the conference, and with Northwestern University working alcohol sales into its plan for a new stadium, Memorial Stadium remains dry.

It's a distinction — along with being the only Big Ten Conference member that is not currently affiliated with the Association of American Universities — that University of Nebraska administrators have noticed.

"We are quickly becoming a club of one," said Chris Kabourek, NU's vice president for business and finance. "We need to ask ourselves why we're 1 of 18."

Since 2012, when the University of Minnesota became the first Big Ten school to sell beer during college football games, more and more members have also taken a similar leap.

Ohio State University and the University of Maryland turned on taps at games in 2016, with a larger wave of schools coming between 2019 and 2021, culminating in the switch being made at Michigan and Wisconsin earlier this year.

NU officials have said a \$450 million planned renovation of Memorial Stadium would have included a buildout of infrastructure that allowed Husker fans to enjoy an alcoholic drink during a game or other event.

Last fall, former Husker Athletic Director Trev Alberts said that while the demand from fans for beer, an amenity they can get at away games, was growing, the stadium did not have the point of sale or Wi-Fi to handle it.

Husker Athletics has made two new improvements to the stadium over the last several months — better Wi-Fi as well as cashless concessions — which seem to suggest strides have been taken in joining NU with its peers.

Kabourek said that as NU shifts its focus on how to move forward on the massive overhaul of the 100-year-old stadium, fans could see progress sooner rather than later.

"There's a lot of infrastructure planning that needs to go in to be able to serve alcohol on gameday — that still holds true," Kabourek said. "But I think we can bifurcate the potential sale of alcohol at football games that's not tied to the \$450 million project."

Both Kabourek and athletic director Troy Dannen see beer and alcohol sales as a new way to drive revenue into the Husker Athletics machine, particularly at a time when collegiate athletics is moving toward compensating students for their talents on the field.

Last season at Pinnacle Bank Arena, Husker fans spent more than \$936,000 on alcohol sales at men's (\$833,078) and women's (\$103,208) basketball games combined, netting the Athletic Department nearly \$76,500 in revenue.

At Haymarket Park, where alcohol sales were approved for the final 12 home games of the season, the gross alcohol sales nearly reached \$136,000, with NU's royalty topping \$58,400. That revenue was put back into the baseball and softball venue for improvements.

"Alcohol at PBA and Haymarket Park was truly more of a fan enhancement," Kabourek said. "There will be an economic consideration when you talk about a venue like Memorial Stadium."

Ohio State generated \$1.1 million from beer sales in the first year it was allowed, which it used to hire four new university police officers, The Lantern student newspaper reported.

Turning on the taps inside Ohio Stadium, which has a capacity of nearly 103,000 fans, also resulted in fewer alcohol-related incidents inside the horseshoe, which came as a surprise to OSU officials.

In 2016, Ohio State recorded 26 arrests in the stadium and 25 ejections, compared to 18 arrests and 85 ejections a year previously. A majority of those arrests came from students illegally purchasing alcohol, the paper reported, or legally purchasing alcohol to give to someone underage.

NU officials have said very few incidents have been reported at any of the venues where alcohol is available, whether they are Husker contests or at the University of Nebraska Omaha, where beer is sold at Maverick hockey games.

UNL Chancellor Rodney Bennett, who was president of the University of Southern Mississippi when the sale of beer and light wine became available in 2019, said the fears of fans becoming too intoxicated or getting violent in the stands "never manifested."

"I think what it did there, that I suspect it would do here, would really prevent overconsumption prior to coming into the stadium," he said. "People would be very responsible of their consumption of alcohol and would be very mindful of people who are around them and appreciate they have an opportunity to have it in the stadium."

Kabourek said Big Ten presidents and chief financial officers have also reported fan behavior hasn't changed for the worse since stadiums started selling alcohol: "It's been pretty unanimous that fan behavior has improved at most of these places."

Until that time comes to Lincoln, NU officials said more modernization and preparation needs to be done in order to roll out a new amenity for Husker fans.

"I think we are prepared to engage the board sooner rather than later in this conversation to see their appetite and where they want to go with it," Kabourek said. "It's the evolution of college athletics and I think there's more of a comfort level that this is going to be part of the gameday experience."

Nebraska troopers arrest 112 impaired drivers during ‘Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over’ campaign

Written by 1011 NOW Staff

LINCOLN, Neb. (KOLN) - From August 14 through Labor Day weekend, Nebraska State Patrol troopers arrested 112 people for driving under the influence during the ‘Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over’ campaign.

Along with the 112 arrests for DUI, troopers issued:

- 1,792 citations for speeding
- 84 citations for driving over 100 mph
- 127 citations for driving under suspension
- 50 citations for having an open alcohol container
- 36 citations for minor in possession of alcohol
- 38 citations for not wearing a seat belt
- 24 citations for improper child restraint

Troopers performed 717 motorist assists during the campaign as well.

“This has been a busy summer across Nebraska,” Colonel John Bolduc, Superintendent of the NSP, said. “But now that summer travel is in the rear view, it’s still important that we all do our part to keep roads safe. Always have a sober driver, watch your speed, put your phone down, and buckle up.”

The ‘Drive Sober or Get Pulled Over’ campaign brought together troopers throughout the state to combat impaired driving. The campaign was put on with help from the Nebraska Department of Transportation.

Since Memorial Day weekend, troopers across Nebraska made 444 arrests for DUI. Troopers also issued:

- 7,882 citations for speeding
- 376 citations for driving over 100 mph
- 608 citations for driving under suspension
- 217 citations for having an open alcohol container
- 153 citations for minor in possession of alcohol
- 217 citations for not wearing a seat belt
- 121 citations for improper child restraint

NSP said that throughout the summer, troopers also assisted over 3,600 motorists on Nebraska roadways.

Elmwood Park-area Mega Saver granted liquor license with some restrictions

Written by Alex McLoon

OMAHA, Neb. — Mega Saver is set to bring a new location to 72nd and Dodge streets despite pushback from city council and neighborhood residents.

The state Liquor Control Commission approved a liquor license for the proposed Mega Saver, meaning it will move into the neighborhood, but no single cans of beer or single shot containers.

"Mega Saver doesn't contribute to the positive transformation," said Diana Failla.

Wednesday's decision was a linchpin for whether the company's 29th location can move in.

It's adjacent to the Elmwood Park neighborhood, where there's concern for alcohol consumption and sales to minors.

"This is a poor location," said Elmwood Park resident Susan Engstrom.

"There's no pedestrian protection there," said Elmwood Park resident Kathleen Marshall.

"Can Mega Saver responsibly sell alcohol?" asked Elmwood Park resident Kevin Kuzelka.

Mega Saver has owned the former Fuddruckers property since 2018, and said the denial of the license would be a warning sign for future tenants.

"I feel they should be given a chance," said Mega Saver customer Jennifer Blair.

The number of the store's prior alcohol violations came under question, as well as thousands of signatures in support of the company, which Mega Saver said it collected since late August at its nearby locations.

The company's attorney and COO said 2021 was a turning point for improvement after "several" violations.

"Every register in our location has a scan id requirement so when a customer comes to buy tobacco or liquor, they're asked to scan id automatically," said Lola Khalikova.

In the end, it's a small win for the neighborhood when it comes to the size of alcohol available.

The state liquor commission also confirmed Mega Saver over the past 20 years has had 41 alcohol violations across its Nebraska locations.

Most of them were failed compliance checks.