

****MEDIA RELEASE****

BIG LAKE POLIC DEPARTMENT



160 Lake Street North, Big Lake MN, 55309

Incident Number: N/A

Date/Time: 6/3/2014

Big Lake City Council Approves Social Host Ordinance

One public safety issue that confronts all jurisdictions, including the City of Big Lake, is that of underage consumption of alcohol. Cities and Counties in Minnesota have been enacting a powerful tool for law enforcement, in the form of Social Host Ordinances. Currently in Minnesota, 109 Cities, and 22 Counties have enacted Social Host Ordinances, including Sherburne County, Elk River, Becker, and St. Cloud. The City of Big Lake joins this list as the 110th City as of May 28th. On May 28th the Big Lake City Council approved a Social Host Ordinance, as proposed by the Big Lake Police Department.

The ordinance is basic, making it a misdemeanor offense to “provide, host or allow, an event or gathering on public or private property where it is reasonably foreseeable underage individuals will consume or possess alcoholic beverages.” There are exceptions that include exemptions already granted by state statute for: underage consumption with parents in a household, protected religious rights, and those employed by state statute as servers in the scope of employment.

Underage gatherings and consumption contribute to dangerous drinking behavior including overconsumption and vehicle accidents, in addition to disorder in neighborhoods. It is the goal of this ordinance to hold accountable those who knowingly host these types of gatherings, and in turn increase safety related to underage alcohol consumption. Big Lake Police will begin enforcing the ordinance as of today.