

Councillors' Office

Hon Amy Adams
Minister of Justice
Freepost Parliament
Private Bag 18 888
Parliament Buildings
Wellington 6160

15 June 2015

Dear Minister Adams,

I have been requested to write to you on behalf of the Eden Park Community Liaison Group. This is a group established via Resource Consents to assist in the monitoring and management of events at Eden Park. It brings together the key stakeholders with an interest in the smooth operation of activities at Eden Park, such as the Eden Park Trust, Council, Auckland Transport, the Local Board and local community and business groups. This group is deeply concerned about recent trends in the liquor industry, which is allowing patrons to enter events with concealed sachets of alcohol.

Alcohol sachets came onto the New Zealand market in 2013 and are available for purchase at nearly 100 stores throughout the North Island. The packets of flavoured alcohol, branded as 'Cheeky' and 'Sneaky,' contain 20% alcohol and are designed to fit into the palm of your hand, pocket or wallet. A six pack of the 25ml sachets costs about \$10 and is marketed as having "more punch than your average RTD". Worryingly, they are promoted as condom-like sachet drinks to carry all the time and consume in any scenario, even fishing! They have been banned by some retailers in Britain and are the cheapest single drink on sale, at just \$2. These products reduce ability to control alcohol consumption at public events and particularly put young people at risk of harmful levels of intoxication and alcohol related violence.

The concern is that these products are cheap and have high alcohol volume. The specific sachet packaging means that they can be easily concealed on a person and smuggled into events where there are restricted licence rules for safety reasons such as rugby matches and concerts. This runs the risk of poor crowd management and uncontrollable punters. Eden Park has found numerous empty sachets after big games.

Sachets are designed for one purpose, and that is to conceal or hide from view, alcohol in a concentrated form. The obvious intent when purchasing these products is to elude detection by Police, event/licensed premises security personnel and general processes aimed at preventing alcohol abuse, or the smuggling of alcohol into controlled/managed environments i.e. stadiums, organised juvenile gatherings and the like.

The fears for licensees are very real. Under the conditions of the new alcohol management act, stringent controls are imposed upon licence holders. The consequences of failing to manage intoxication at licensed premises are onerous, with the real risk of licence suspension, resulting in

business closure. For those proprietors indifferent to the safe and appropriate management of alcohol consumption, these penalties fit the crime; however the majority of proprietors are responsible and have put in place stringent controls for complying with their moral and legal responsibilities.

Another issue of concern is the availability of concealment products such as fake tampons, binoculars and bra padding (see attached). Concealment products/devices circumvent normally effective controls put in place by responsible proprietors to control and manage consumption of alcohol, thereby increasing their risk of licence suspension, not to mention the safety of individuals visiting their premises.

A powdered alcohol product branded as "Palcohol" has just been approved by a federal agency in the United States and there is great concern that it could become available in New Zealand in the near future. As well as all the risks and dangers associated with the before-mentioned gel sachets, the powder form also means that they can be snorted, which could cause faster intoxication. They could be easily added to someone's drink without them knowing, making people more vulnerable to having their drink spiked in a bar or have other intoxicating substances mixed in with the powder.

Licensees say it is already getting increasingly harder to monitor patrons with the amount of preloading that patrons are partaking in, combined with the availability of sachets, which are sold over the counter at liquor stores and can be smuggled on to licensed premises.

The Eden Park Community Liaison Group is concerned that these new products directly undermine the government's intentions around the new Alcohol Management Act, and that steps need to be taken urgently to address these potential abuses of the Act's intentions, and to provide ongoing flexibility to address future concealment developments.

We ask you as Minister to consider a New Zealand ban on

- Alcohol gel sachets
- Powdered alcohol products
- Alcohol concealment devices

Yours sincerely



Dr Cathy Casey

For the Eden park Community Liaison Group

THE SNEAK.....

