

FACT SHEET

KEG REGISTRATION

Is underage alcohol use really a problem?

Underage drinking is an expensive problem in the United States. One researcher for the Journal of Studies on Alcohol estimated that dealing with the consequences of underage drinking cost more than \$62 billion per year.

According to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), underage drinking has been associated with:

- Damage to growing brains
- Alcohol dependence
- Violence
- Dropping out of school
- Drinking and driving
- Riding with drinking drivers
- Unplanned and unsafe sex
- Fatalities and injuries from drowning, burns, falls, homicides, suicides, and crashes

But is it a problem in Illinois?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a lot of information related to alcohol use in the United States. The CDC report titled *High School Youth Risk Behavior Survey* revealed the following facts:

- According to the 2017 self-reports by Illinois students grades 9-12:
 - 57% had at least one drink of alcohol in their life.
 - 27% had at least 1 or more drinks of alcohol in the past 30 days.
 - 12% had at least 5 or more drinks of alcohol in a row (binge drinking) in the past 30 days.

According to the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation (PIRE) in a report titled *Underage Drinking in Illinois...*

- Underage drinking cost the citizens of Illinois 2.8 billion dollars in 2013, or \$2,283 per year for each youth in the state.

Why is the legal drinking age not enough?

While the minimum drinking age of 21 has helped decrease injuries related to youth drinking (saving an estimated 22,804 lives between 1975 and 2002), national surveys indicate that more than 94% of twelfth graders and almost 68% of eighth graders report that alcohol is easy to obtain.

What does Keg Registration mean?

Keg registration means that beer kegs are marked with unique identification numbers. This number is recorded along with the keg purchaser's name, address, telephone number, and driver's license number. This information is saved for a set time period. If a beer keg is confiscated by police at a drinking party with underage youth, the adult who purchased the keg can be identified. This person can then be fined or arrested for supplying alcohol to underage youth. Because people often scatter when police arrive, the registration tag is necessary to trace who purchased the keg.

Won't people who buy Kegs for youth simply destroy the registration tag?

The keg deposit fee (which can be as much as \$50) is forfeited if a keg is returned with an identification tag that is defaced or missing.

How will the person who buys the keg know they cannot serve alcohol to underage youth?

People who purchase kegs sign a statement that they understand they cannot serve alcohol to underage youth, and that they understand the penalties for doing so.

Won't youth just get alcohol some other way?

Perhaps, but kegs are the most inexpensive way to purchase large quantities of alcohol. A study published in the *Journal of Studies on Alcohol* has shown that an increase in the price of alcoholic beverages decreases youth drinking.

What are the effects of keg registration laws?

Because keg registration laws are fairly new, there are not many research studies that evaluate their effects. One researcher, writing for the *Preventive Medicine Journal*, found that keg registration laws are associated with a significant decrease in traffic fatalities. In addition, research has shown that limiting access to alcohol decreases underage drinking.