



MEDIA RELEASE

Investigative Unit

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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OIU agents to bystanders: If you see drinks being drugged – Don't turn your back, ACT

(Columbus) – As students at Ohio's colleges begin returning to campus, agents with the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Ohio Investigative Unit want to remind everyone *Don't turn your back, ACT*. Drugging drinks, or drink tampering, happens to both female and males, at bars or even house parties, and often leads to sexual assault or robbery.

"We want friends to look out for their friends, fellow bar-goers to look out for fellow bar-goers and bar staff to look out for their patrons," said Agent-in-Charge Eric Wolf. "We want everyone to be safe. If you see someone tampering with another person's drink – don't turn your back on them, don't be afraid to step up and act."

Bystanders and bar staff should let the person know their drink may have been compromised, get the individual out of the situation and call 9-1-1 immediately. Contain the evidence if it is possible to do so.

Law enforcement officials know drink tampering happens, however it is often not reported. In many situations, victims may be too embarrassed to come forward, or may not have a full recollection of what occurred. According to the Ohio Incident Based Reporting System (OIBERS), nine forcible rapes with drugs as a weapon were reported in 2013.

OIU is asking all bar patrons or party-goers to remember: Go to the bar with a friend you trust; both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks can be drugged; get bottles or cans; don't leave your drink sitting around – get a new one; do not accept drinks from anyone you don't know or trust; if your back is turned for one second, that is enough time to tamper with a beverage – get a new one; and most importantly watch out for your friends and others.

Also, drink tampering isn't just confined to college campuses. In July, OIU provided educational posters to the Ottawa County Sheriff and Put-in-Bay Police Department to distribute to island liquor establishments. The agencies requested the posters after several reports of drugged drinks began surfacing earlier this summer.

If you have information about a person tampering drinks please notify the Ohio Investigative Unit by calling #677 on your cell phone and your complaint will be investigated.

NOTE: Not all police departments in the state of Ohio report their crimes to OIBRS.

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The Ohio Investigative Unit agents are plain-clothed fully sworn peace officers. OIU is charged with enforcing the state's liquor laws and is the only state law enforcement agency specifically tasked with investigating food stamp fraud crimes. Agents also investigate tobacco violations.

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