



MEDIA RELEASE

Investigative Unit

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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In 2013, OIU issued 267 administrative charges for drug offenses

Cuyahoga County man, business indicted and liquor permit administratively charged

(Columbus) – While a majority of the illegal activities are connected to alcohol or food stamp violations, agents with the Ohio Investigative Unit investigate drug-related violations at liquor permit premises as well.

In 2013, agents filed 267 administrative charges against liquor permits in Ohio for drug use, possession, sales, and paraphernalia sales and/or possession.

In the state of Ohio, liquor permit holders must comply with Ohio laws, and allowing or even participating in illegal drug activity is a violation of the liquor permit.

Last month, a Cuyahoga County man and business were indicted on drug-related charges after agents received a complaint of drug trafficking taking place at a liquor permit establishment.

Mahmoud Taher, 48, Brooklyn, and 3344 East 116, Inc., also known as the Kinsman Market, 3344 East 116th Street in Cleveland, were each indicted by the Cuyahoga County Grand Jury on eight counts of drug possession and 14 counts of trafficking on June 12.

During the 14-month investigation, agents were able to purchase 1,067 pills, including OxyContin, Percoset and Vicodin at the Kinsman Market. During a search in November, agents seized 426 pills, of which 225 were controlled substances such as OxyContin, Ambien, Percocet and Morphine/MSIR.

At the conclusion of the investigation, the liquor permit was administratively charged with six counts of drug sales, and one count each of drug possession, theft and receiving stolen property.

“Anytime there is illegal drug activity, it is a detriment to the area,” said Cleveland District Agent-in-Charge Greg Croft. “By sifting out the illegal activity, we are helping make the businesses safer for everyone.”

As with all cases, the administrative charges will be presented to the Ohio Liquor Control Commission once all criminal proceedings are completed. The commission has the authority to issue penalties such as fines, suspensions or revocation of the liquor permit.

If you have information about a liquor permit premise engaging in illegal drug activity, please notify the Ohio Investigative Unit by calling #677 on your cell phone and your complaint will be investigated.

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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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