

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAFE Glen Cove Coalition: April is Alcohol Awareness Month

In 1987, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) designated April as Alcohol Awareness Month. NCADD is an advocacy organization made up of individuals from the medical, scientific, political, and social fields who work together to overcome the stigma of alcoholism by increasing public understanding of the disease and raising awareness about the risks of alcohol consumption and the importance of strong alcohol policy safeguards.

While many recognize the dangers of excessive drinking, fewer people are aware of the severe public health consequences it can have—ranging from increased cancer risks to its significant role in gun violence. Addressing these issues requires not only public awareness but also stronger regulatory compliance and data-driven interventions.

According to the U.S. Surgeon General's 2025 Advisory: Alcohol and Cancer Risks, Alcohol consumption is a leading preventable cause of cancer in the United States, contributing to nearly 100,000 cancer cases and 20,000 cancer-related deaths annually. However, public awareness of this risk remains low—less than half of U.S. adults recognize alcohol as a cancer risk factor.

Scientific research has established a direct link between alcohol and at least seven types of cancer, including breast, colorectal, liver, and oral cancers. Even moderate alcohol consumption—such as one drink per day—can increase cancer risk. Alarmingly, alcohol-related cancer deaths shorten lives by an average of 15 years, with the total years of potential life lost estimated at 305,000 annually.

To reduce alcohol-related-cancer risks, The Surgeon General Advisory recommends:

- Include a clear warning label on alcoholic beverages to clearly state the link between alcohol and cancer.
- Reassessing recommended alcohol consumption limits to reflect the latest scientific evidence on cancer risk.

- Expanding public education efforts to increase awareness of the link between alcohol and cancer.
- Encouraging healthcare providers to inform patients about the risks, conduct alcohol screenings, and provide brief interventions and treatment referrals.

Beyond its link to cancer, alcohol also plays a critical role in gun violence, a connection that is often overlooked in public discourse. Research reveals that 34% of firearm homicide perpetrators, 30% of firearm homicide victims, and 25% of firearm suicide victims engaged in heavy alcohol use prior to death. This suggests that alcohol not only coexists with gun violence but actively fuels it by increasing aggression and impairing judgment. Alcohol lowers inhibitions, clouds decision-making, and distorts perceptions of threats, making violent encounters more likely—and more lethal when firearms are involved. Recognizing this link is crucial in addressing both excessive alcohol consumption and gun-related deaths as public health issues.

A 2023 report from The Consortium for Risk-Based Firearm Policy and the Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions recommends restricting guns in places where alcohol is consumed. Additional recommendations include limiting the hours in which alcohol can be sold, reducing alcohol outlet density, and increasing alcohol taxes to help prevent excessive drinking that fuels violent behavior.

Tackling alcohol-related harms goes beyond awareness—it requires effective regulation and enforcement. A 2022 report from the Maine Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages and Lottery Operations highlights the importance of using data analytics to strengthen alcohol compliance efforts. Armed with insights from this report, Maine was able to double the number of alcohol inspectors, a strategy that other states could adopt to enhance enforcement capacity.

By integrating robust data collection methods—such as compliance checks, public health surveys, and law enforcement reports—regulators can identify high-risk patterns, such as:

- Underage drinking hotspots
- Alcohol sales to intoxicated individuals
- High-risk times and locations for alcohol-related violations

These insights enable state leaders to allocate resources more strategically, ensuring that enforcement efforts target the areas where they are needed most. Furthermore, data can help policymakers understand how factors like alcohol outlet density correlate with public health concerns, including impaired-driving incidents, alcohol poisoning, and violent crime.

By assessing compliance needs with detailed data from enforcement efforts, public health indicators, and industry trends, key leaders can advocate for necessary policy changes, increased personnel, and improved regulatory infrastructure to enhance public health protections.

The SAFE Glen Cove Coalition was formed in 2003 to change societal norms about alcohol and substance use. The Coalition is concerned about excessive alcohol use in youth and adults and

seeks to educate the community about its negative effects on one's health and wellness. The Glen Cove Police Department has been a longstanding member of the Coalition and works diligently to monitor alcohol sales to minors, monitor hot spots where youth are known to drink and provide prevention education to youth and adults about Glen Cove Social Host Law and its consequences throughout the year. To learn more about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition please follow us on www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition or visit SAFE's website to learn more about Alcohol and its negative consequences please visit www.safeglencove.org.