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ALCOHOL LICENSE REQUESTS INCREASE DRAMATICALLY IN INDIANA AND MARION COUNTY

Indiana and Marion County have seen a dramatic increase in requests for alcohol licenses in 2010, largely due to a change in policy by the Walgreen Co., reports Drug Free Marion County.

Previously, the Walgreen Co. did not allow any of its stores to sell alcohol. In late 2009, it reversed its stance. As a result, 102 alcohol license requests have been filed by Walgreens stores in Indiana. In Marion County alone, 29 requests have been filed – 28 percent of all Walgreens permit requests in the state.

The type of permit requested in Marion County would allow for the sale of beer, wine and hard liquor in each Walgreens location. Marion County already has 169 permits for package-liquor stores; 202 beer and wine dealer permits for convenience, drug and grocery stores; and 105 liquor-dealer permits for pharmacies, either in stand-alone drug stores or as part of a grocery store.

“We are concerned about this sudden increase in alcohol-license requests,” says Nancy Beals, project coordinator for Drug Free Marion County. “Marion County already is experiencing difficulties with alcohol-license distribution. A survey of County jurisdictions shows that some actually have a higher number of permits than the current quota dictates.

“Local crime statistics show a significant number of crimes – including offenses against a person (assault, domestic battery, armed robbery) and property offenses (vandalism, larceny, burglary, stolen vehicles, trespassing) – in zip codes with a high density of alcohol licenses. We believe neighborhood associations and residents need to be aware of these new license requests, especially in those zip codes already over-saturated with alcohol outlets.”

Many of the new Walgreens permits are scheduled to be heard by the local Alcohol Control Board on March 1, 2010.

Drug Free Marion County offers an online Remonstrations Manual that explains the local ACB hearing process and the steps citizens and groups can take if they are concerned about a license request in their area. DFMC also has available detailed information about the number of existing alcohol licenses within particular Marion County zip codes and alcohol license quota information. These resources can be found at www.drugfreemarioncounty.org.

Drug Free Marion County – a not-for-profit organization – plans, promotes, implements and coordinates community efforts to prevent and reduce the abuse of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs among youth and adults. For more information, call 317-254-2815 or visit www.drugfreemarioncounty.org.