**Safety Bulletin**

Due to the recent incidents involving alcoholic energy drinks that drew national attention and the associated safety issues that were brought to light, UCPD, in partnership with Party Safe @ Cal, is issuing the following informational safety bulletin to alert our campus community of this rising health and safety concern.

What are alcoholic energy drinks?
Alcoholic energy drinks are prepackaged beverages that combine alcohol with caffeine, guarana, ginseng, taurine, and other ingredients commonly associated with nonalcoholic energy drinks. They may be malt- or distilled spirits-based. All caffeinated alcoholic beverages are essentially alcopops - they're sweet, easy to drink (though many say they taste terrible), and marketed toward a young audience. What sets them apart, however, is the addition of stimulants. Alcohol-laced energy drinks are packaged in cans that don brightly colored, flashy designs and often mimic the look of their non-alcoholic counterparts.

Why is it dangerous to combine alcohol with caffeine and other stimulants?
Combining caffeine and alcohol constitutes a dangerous mix, particularly for young people, because caffeine reduces a person's sense of alcohol intoxication (i.e., "feeling drunk") and alcohol impairs judgment and reaction time. Many alcoholic energy drinks contain substantially higher levels of caffeine than servings of coffee. The caffeine masks the intoxicating effects of alcohol. This effect increases risks of engaging in violent or other high-risk physical behaviors. Young people are more likely to take risks than adults and to suffer high rates of alcohol problems, including alcohol-related traffic accidents, violence, sexual assault, and suicide.

In a study conducted at Wake Forest University, researchers found that students who consumed alcohol mixed with energy drinks were twice as likely to be hurt or injured, twice as likely to require medical attention, and twice as likely to ride with an intoxicated driver, as were students who did not consume alcohol mixed with energy drinks. Students who drank alcohol mixed with energy drinks were also more than twice as likely to take advantage of someone else sexually, and almost twice as likely to be taken advantage of.

Additionally, because many caffeinated alcoholic beverages are served in 23 ounce containers with up to 12% alcohol - drinking a single can is roughly the equivalent of drinking almost a full six pack of beer laced with high levels of caffeine. Alcoholic energy drinks are also inexpensive - in many cases substantially cheaper than their non-alcoholic energy drink cousins.

**Recommendations:**

**Drinkers:** *If you are under 21 years of age, DO NOT consume any alcoholic beverage as it is illegal and you may be subject to both criminal violation(s) and/or University sanction(s).* If you are of the legal drinking age (21 and over), know exactly what you’re drinking, set a limit and stick to it, plan ahead and know how you’re getting home.

**Hosts:** Know and control the beverages you’re serving. Stay sober and easy to find. Call 9-1-1 if signs of alcohol poisoning or other trouble occurs.

**Community:** Make health and safety our #1 priority. If you see or hear something related to the consumption, sales, or service of alcohol that might be a problem, do something – call 9-1-1.

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As with any emergency situation, call 9-1-1, or
From cell phone - **510-642-3333 (UC Police)** or **510-981-5911** (Berkeley Police)