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News

D.A. Murphy warns hotels over underage drinking

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BALLSTON SPA — People younger than 21 will not get a warm reception at area hotels, motels and campgrounds this summer if they are planning to consume alcohol during their stay, District Attorney James A. Murphy III said Friday.

Murphy sent a letter Friday to nearly 60 hotels, motels and campgrounds in the county warning them to be on the lookout for underage drinking.

“By being cognizant of patrons attempting to do business with you, you have the ability to deter the possibility of parties where underage drinking will be involved,” Murphy wrote to the establishments’ owners and managers.

In a press release, Murphy said the letter was a response to several recent underage drinking investigations of illegal consumption in hotels, motels or campgrounds.

Richard Miczek, owner of the St. Charles and St. Francis motels on South Broadway, said he avoids the problem of underage drinking by only renting rooms to people 21 and older.

“We screen them pretty well,” he said, adding that if he has any suspicions about his patrons he calls the police “absolutely, every time.”

Bob Herrold, general manager of the Residence Inn by Marriot on Excelsior Avenue, said that although he does rent rooms to anyone under 18, his staff keeps vigilant watch for illegal activity.

“If there are things going on that shouldn’t be, we’ll take the appropriate action,” he said.

In the letter, Murphy urged the owners and managers to call 911; the Underage Drinking Hotline, 1-866-UNDER 21; or a confidential tips hotline: 584-TIPS, if they suspect underage drinking.

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