Learn how to have a safe party!

Safe House Party Guide FOR YOU

Don't get stuck hosting something like this!
A GREAT Responsibility

Being a host for a house party is a GREAT responsibility; you are legally responsible for what happens at the party whether it is underage drinking, illegal drug use, property damage, and/or fights.

You can avoid problems while having a fun time if you PLAN AHEAD. Check out the below recommendations in order to assist in planning a safe and fun event.

For additional info on planning a fun event while avoiding legal concerns, take the Student Alcohol Responsibility Training (START) www.startcollegeservertraining.com.

Before the Party

First Things First – Know the Laws Concerning House Parties:

Open House Parties
Homeowners, landlords, or tenants who permit consumption of alcohol by persons under 21 years, or fail to stop persons under 21 from drinking can be charged with a misdemeanor.

Minor in Possession
It is against the law for persons under 21 to obtain, partake of, or be in ownership of alcohol. If you have drunk alcohol, it is not necessary to be holding in order to be charged with Minor in Possession (MIP). The offense is a misdemeanor; a first offense usually carries a fine of not less than $250 plus $24.50 in court costs, or two years probation and 20 hours of community service. The maximum penalty for a misdemeanor is a $500 fine and 90 days in jail.

Driving while intoxicated
For persons over 21, legal BAC in Missouri is .08 for driving while intoxicated; however, minors can be charged with a BAC of .02 under recent Zero Tolerance regulations. The results of a conviction may include community service, license revocation, jail time, classes, or fines.

Fake IDs
It is illegal to deface a driver’s license, loan a driver’s license to a minor, create a fictitious driver’s license, or use someone else’s driver’s license. Those who do will be found guilty of a misdemeanor.

Selling Alcohol Without a License
Any persons who engage in practices such as selling cups, promoting all-you-can-drink with admission parties, or otherwise engaging in exchange of money for alcohol will be guilty of a felony under Missouri statutes. A felony arrest means fingerprinting, and a resulting criminal record. A felony conviction carries 2-5 years in the state department of corrections or one month to one year in the county jail, plus up to $1000 fine. A charge without conviction will remain on record, which can be reviewed by potential employers.
**Keg Registration**
If a keg is confiscated at a party where minors have been drinking, the person whose name is on the keg registration could be charged with supplying alcohol to persons under 21.

**Open Container**
Open containers of alcohol are prohibited in public places, including parking lots, school yards, sidewalks, public parks, or any other public property.

**Noise**
Persons who disturb others with loud noises, such as yelling or loud music which can be heard at a distance of more than 100 feet, can be charged with a misdemeanor if the occurrence is between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m.

**Public Urination**
It is a misdemeanor to urinate in a public location.

**Drugs**
Hosts may be held accountable if illegal drug use is discovered at the party.

**Physical Assault**
Persons who fight or take part in aggressive acts at parties can be charged with a misdemeanor.

**Littering**
Persons who throw containers of alcohol or other forms of trash on the ground can be arrested or charged with littering.

**Illegal Parking**
Parking in areas which violate city ordinances can result in towing of the vehicle.

**Fire Safety**

As the host, you should make the premises free of any fire hazards to ensure this is not an issue at your event.

- Check all smoke detectors prior to the event to be sure that they are all in working order, and replace old batteries. There should be a smoke detector on each floor and in each bedroom.
- Do not allow smoking inside the premises, or burn candles or incense during the party.
- Check the condition of all space heaters, if applicable.
- Draw up an emergency escape plan with at least two exits; inform your guests of your plan and locations of your emergency exits.
- Make sure that all exits are unlocked and easily accessible.
- If the party involves grilling food, make sure that your grill is at least 20 feet away from the building.
- Don’t overload electrical outlets. Use a fused power strip, if necessary.
- Keep flammable fluids, such as gasoline or lighter fluid outside.
- Do not leave foods unattended on the stove or in the microwave.
Important Phone Numbers

Have a list of phone numbers prepared in the event of an emergency.

Missouri S&T on-campus/off-campus Emergency Response...............................(573) 341-4300 / 911
Rolla Police Department...........................................................................................................(573) 308-1213
Rolla Fire Department...........................................................................................................(573) 364-3997
Phelps County Regional Medical Center.................................................................................(573) 458-8899

Other Pre-Party Considerations

☐ Be considerate to your neighbors. Discuss your party plans and exchange phone numbers.
☐ Consider hiring professional security to ensure the event goes smoothly. This prevents uninvited guests from crashing the party, allows collection of keys, and provides someone to call taxis for intoxicated guests.
☐ Decide whether alcohol will be at the party. If alcohol is going to be part of the festivities, BYOB is the best option. Consider having a non–alcohol party in order to reduce problems.
☐ Provide plenty of food and non-alcoholic beverages (minors and non-drinkers may be present).
☐ Check your lease for rules which limit number of occupants allowed on the premises at one time. If you have renter’s insurance, know policies regarding damages which may not be covered if linked to illegal activity.
☐ Limit how many guests you’ll have. This will allow for more movement in the house in the event of an emergency and prevent excess capacity.
☐ Inform guests of the goal to provide a great atmosphere while respecting legal boundaries.
☐ If you are a member of a recognized student organization, review your institution and national organization policies regarding parties and any possible liability.
☐ Make sure to inform guests when the party will begin and end; ideally, a party should run no longer than four hours.
☐ Make sure that all the guests have a safe alternative plan to get home if they plan to drink alcoholic beverages.
☐ Protect, cover, or put away your stuff! Lock up anything valuable; put away personal items, or anything which could be stolen or destroyed by guests.

During the party

☐ Stay sober and supervise your guests throughout the party; enlist the help of other sober friends to help keep the party fun and without problems.
☐ Keep AND stick to the guest list. Then, you know everyone at your party, and it also provides extra safety and reduces the risk of property damage and theft.
☐ Check driver’s licenses of persons in attendance to make sure that no minors are drinking.
☐ Keep food and non–alcoholic drinks stocked.
☐ Do not permit smoking inside the house to reduce fire hazards.
☐ Discontinue service of alcohol to persons who become too drunk or are acting out of hand.
☐ Prohibit the use of illegal drugs.
Walk around outside periodically to make sure that the noise level is okay, that there is no litter, adequate parking, or lines of guests waiting to get inside.

Keep the house cooler by opening windows or using fans. Less people will feel the need to go outside to cool off, meaning less noise outside.

Keeps the bathroom line moving. This will keep people inside which may prevent persons urinating or vomiting outside.

If there is a porch above the first floor, limit the number of occupants at a given time in order to prevent collapse (or close off all access entirely to prevent any problem).

Look for signs of potential fighting, sexual assault, or alcohol poisoning.

Keep tabs on guests to ensure that guests who appear intoxicated do not drive; do not allow them to wander off or leave alone on foot.

After the party

Before guests leave, confirm that everyone has a safe ride home and that no one leaves with an open container. Check for open containers at the door.

Encourage guests to check-in with friends and touch-base with regard to their whereabouts.

Clean up outside if trash has been left behind.

Other Considerations

If the Police Come to Your Party…

• Do not avoid them by closing/locking the door and running away. This will not help you avoid a citation. The host of the party should speak with the officers.
• Lower the music and quiet guests. Inform your guests to listen and follow the officers’ instructions.
• Be respectful of the officers, and act in accordance with their requests. Unmanageable and uncooperative behavior may increase the chances of citation.
• To voice questions/concerns about police conduct and/or procedure, contact the appropriate agency the following day.

Care of Intoxicated Persons...

• Do not attempt to keep the person awake.
• Do not give the person coffee, stimulants, or food in attempts to sober the individual.
• Do not attempt to restrain the person’s movements.
• Do not revive person with a cold shower. This could result in possible loss of consciousness as a result of trauma.
• Do not try to get the person to “walk it off”, or engage the person in any type of exercise.
• Do not give the person any type of drug, including aspirin.
Alcohol Poisoning
Alcohol Poisoning is a serious concern – it can result in death. Be aware of the symptoms and how to help, so you can act immediately and appropriately.

Signs of alcohol poisoning:
• Cold, clammy skin, possibly bluish in color.
• Semi-conscious or unconscious; unresponsive or will not wake.
• Not reactive to pinch of individual’s skin and/or name being called.
• Person vomits while sleeping or passed out and does not wake up.
• Weak pulse.
• Person is breathing less than 8 or 9 breaths per minute, not breathing at all, or more than 10 seconds elapses between breaths.

Recommended Treatment of Persons with Alcohol Poisoning:
• Contact emergency medical professionals immediately.
• Do not allow the person to sleep on his/her back. Put the individual on his/her side.
• Do not try to keep the individual awake by means of cold shower or walking.
• Leave the person alone ONLY if you are notifying emergency professionals.

Sexual Assault
• Not all encounters between two people who know each other are consensual. Many sexual assaults are committed by someone the victim knows (acquaintance rape/assault). Also, many are premeditated; the assailant targets a person, feeds the individual drinks or another drug until the person is drunk/drugged, and then assaults the person.
• Keep in mind that under Missouri law a person under the influence of alcohol is considered to be ineligible to provide legal consent for sex
• Close off bedrooms or other areas where persons may go to engage in sexual encounters.
• Make sure that contact between guests is consensual and decisions were made when sober.

Personal Safety
• Be sure that all guests who arrive together leave together, in spite of individual protests.
• Prior to the party, encourage friends to agree upon a low risk alcohol limit (host should stay sober), and help each other stick to the limit.
• Establish a code word with friends prior to the event in order to alert them in the event of possible trouble during the party.
• Be aware of location and condition of guests and friends at all times.
• Offer to hold drinks for guests and encourage friends to do the same.
• If drinks are left unattended, replace them with new ones.
• If there seems to be a problematic/troubling situation, do not hesitate to intervene.
• After the party ends, make sure that everyone leaves together.
• Non—drinking guests should have keys in hand before proceeding to their cars.
Much of this guide’s content was taken from and used with permission by: the Office of Violence and Substance Abuse Prevention at the University of Central Missouri; and the Wellness Resource Center at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

This guide was developed by the Student Wellness Office, a part of S&T’s department of Counseling & Disability Support Services/Wellness. It can be found online at http://counsel.mst.edu/wellness.