

NEWS RELEASE

MORLEY OFF LICENCE SOLD ALCO POP TO FOURTEEN YEAR OLD

Harbinder Singh Gill pleaded guilty before Leeds Magistrates on 12 May to the sale of alcohol to a fourteen year girl at his father's off licence. Magistrates fined Gill £1,850 for the sale and a further £300 for failure to display his premise licence details. Gill was also ordered to pay prosecution costs of £726.

The offences occurred at Britannia Road Post Office in Morley in January of this year. A Trading Standards test purchase operation was conducted at the premises following complaints of underage sales of alcohol.

The test purchaser, a fourteen year old schoolgirl was able to purchase a bottle of Reef Vodka Mix drink (ABV 5%). She was served by Gill's part time sales assistant who was so ill trained that she did not even know Reef was an alcoholic drink.

West Yorkshire Trading Standards Service brought the case under the Licensing Act 2003. As holder of the premises licence which authorises the sale of alcohol, Gill was liable for the actions of his employee.

Graham Hebblethwaite Chief Trading Standards Officer, stated: 'I believe the result in this case sends a very clear message to the minority of traders who run premises where children can purchase alcohol. A holder of a premises licence has a clear responsibility to uphold the licensing laws and objectives. This includes training staff to distinguish between alco pops and fruit juice. I advise any person with information on premises serving alcohol to children to report the matter to Consumer Direct: 08454 04 05 06.'

Councillor Keith Wakefield, of the Trading Standards Committee, said: 'I support all action to combat the illegal sales of alcohol. I hope this case illustrates that underage sales of alcohol will not be tolerated and action has been taken to reduce the nuisance, vandalism and all the anti social behaviour which results from children obtaining access to alcohol.'

For further information contact:

David Lodge - Divisional Manager/General Media Contact 0113 2898 243
Andrew Bibby - Principal Officer 0113 289 8237
Dennis Ager - Trading Standards Officer 0113 2898 220