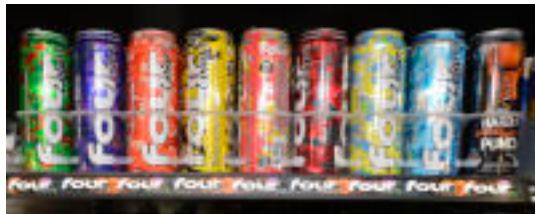




Board of Supervisors to place stricter limitations on 'alcopops' in Contra Costa

By Katrina Cameron kcameron@bayareanewsgroup.com
12/16/2014



MARTINEZ -- The county Board of Supervisors voted unanimously Tuesday to approve recommendations to place greater restrictions on how liquor stores can advertise sugary alcoholic beverages known as "alcopops" and where store-owners can display them in stores.

The board also called for the California State Legislature to ban the sale of alcopops across the state because the state Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control is responsible for regulating the kinds of booze products that businesses may sell.

The sugary alcoholic beverages are the drink of choice to underage drinkers from 12 to 18 years old because they "bridge the gap from soda to alcohol" and have a sweet familiar taste, said Jorge Castillo, a representative from Alcohol Justice, a national organization focused on reducing alcohol-related harm. Despite being too young to purchase the booze themselves, underage drinkers usually have adult friends or family members purchase the alcopops for them.

Alcohol Justice launched a campaign four years ago that successively persuaded the Food and Drug Administration to remove caffeine from Four Loko alcopops in February, Castillo said. As the caffeine went out, the alcopops got bigger and boozier. Four Loko beverages increased to 24 ounces from 12 ounces and 12 percent alcohol from 6 percent alcohol.

"We are thrilled that you are taking this step," he said at the meeting.