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## Underage Drinkers Face License Suspensions

*Many Unaware Of 10-Year-Old Rule*

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**WATERBURY, Conn.** -- Those under the age of 21 caught with alcohol could be in store for a long summer this year.

Underage drinkers, even those caught drinking when they are nowhere near a car, could lose their licenses for months.

Channel 3 Eyewitness News reporter Eric Parker reported that many people are unaware of the 10-year-old requirement.

A punishment of being convicted of underage drinking is the loss of a driver's license for five months.

"They're going to lose their license for five months, so we're saying to them, 'The spring season is here; don't pick up the beer at that party,'" said Department of Motor Vehicles Commissioner Robert Ward.

Parker reported that minors also convicted of possession of alcohol would also have their licenses suspended for five months.

The arrest for underage drinking used to require a court appearance period. Now those charged receive a ticket with no chance for a judge or prosecutor to explain the punishment.

"Many people, in mailing in what's called an infraction ticket, didn't realize they'd lose their license," Ward said.

Ward said the punishment's goal is to work as a deterrent for those considering underage drinking.

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