



How do alcohol retailers' hours of operation impact neighborhoods?

Alcohol Outlet Density

Alcohol Outlet Density (AOD) refers to the number of places where alcohol is sold or served within a specific area. When there are more outlets, alcohol becomes more accessible to consumers, which increases consumption and competition among establishments. Increased competition often leads to more high-visibility advertising and lower prices (e.g., promotional sales, happy hour), which may encourage higher alcohol consumption. Together, accessibility (price, proximity, and prevalence) and visibility increase the health and safety risks to the community.

Neighborhoods with high alcohol availability also have higher:

- rates of binge and heavy drinking
- hospital admissions
- violent crime
- property damage
- emergency service calls
- sexually transmitted diseases
- noise and neighborhood disruption
- public nuisances and property damage
- disorderly conduct

Hours of Operation

The harms of alcohol outlet densities increase in relation to alcohol retailers' hours of operation. For example, assaults and driving under the influence cases are higher during weekend evening hours in neighborhoods with higher numbers of bars and pubs. Similarly, neighborhoods with high alcohol availability after midnight also have increased emergency department visits for alcohol-related injuries as well as assaults, with neighborhoods with retailers open until 5 a.m. experiencing the highest risk for increased assaults. Harms related to extended alcohol sales are a public health and safety concern as well as an economic risk. One study estimated that every additional hour of operation after midnight increases violent crime by roughly five crimes per 100,000 people, costing the state an estimated \$194 million in 2009 alone. A simple target for communities looking to prevent or reduce alcohol-related harms is to limit alcohol sales after midnight.

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