



MEDIA RELEASE
13 September 2006

Submissions have been called for the review of alcohol advertising and Alcohol Healthwatch calls for people to get informed and get involved.

The government review of the regulation of alcohol advertising presents an important opportunity to take a good hard look at the influence of alcohol marketing on our drinking culture.

Alcohol Healthwatch Director Rebecca Williams says recent reviews of the current system of control of liquor advertising have been driven by the industries with a vested interest in protecting the status quo and their profits. She says it's high time we stepped out of industry parameters and approached regulation from a community well-being perspective.

Williams says it's crazy to say on one hand that we are trying to change our 'drinking culture' while on the other, ignore the persuasive influence of alcohol marketing. We say we are concerned with the drinking of our young yet continue to allow young people and their environments to be saturated with the liquor industry promotional messages. And trying to compete with liquor industry resources to get alternative messages out is a waste of tax payers' money.

Williams says industry arguments, such as their claims to only be interested in brand share and that young people are not targeted, are tired and misleading.

Research concludes that constant exposure to alcohol advertising will, at the very least, reinforce drinking among the young, develop 'pro-drinking' attitudes and increase the likelihood of heavier drinking. Hardly the sort of outcomes that support a change to our drinking culture!

Alcohol Healthwatch hosts two international experts on the issue, who will be joined by a strong line up of local experts, at alcohol marketing symposiums being held in both Auckland and Wellington next week.

Media Contact:

Rebecca Williams

Director

Alcohol Healthwatch

Ph: (09) 520 7035

Mob: 021 862 250

Attached: "Alcohol Marketing – Beyond the glamour, fun and sex" – Symposium Invitation

Attached: Review of the regulation of alcohol advertising (document)

Action on Liquor Campaign information and briefing papers (including one on Alcohol Advertising and an additional update on alcohol marketing) can be found at www.ahw.co.nz