



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 17, 2014



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In the early morning hours of September 25, 2014, an automobile accident near Purvis, MS claimed the lives of three teenagers. At the request of the Lamar County Sheriff's Department, the Mississippi Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Bureau of Enforcement initiated an investigation that focused on the activities of these children prior to the accident.

Based on this investigation, which involved numerous interviews, the ABC Bureau of Enforcement has arrested Kristi Morris, age 42, residing at 32 Morris Drive, Purvis, MS 39475. Kristi Morris was charged with six (6) counts of violating the Social Host law. The Social Host law was enacted on July 1, 2011 and makes it unlawful for an adult to knowingly allow minors to possess and consume alcoholic beverages on his or her property. In addition to this, she was charged with six (6) counts of Furnishing Beer/Light Wine to a person under Twenty-One (21) Years of Age and one (1) count of Possession of Beer/Light Wine in a Dry County.

On December 17, 2014, Kristi Morris surrendered herself to officials at the Lamar County Courthouse and was released without bond. She will face these charges in Lamar County Justice Court at a future date. If convicted, she faces a \$1000.00 fine and ninety (90) days incarceration on each count of the Social Host law; and a maximum of \$500.00 fine and thirty (30) days community service for each count of Furnishing Beer/Light Wine to a Minor. Possession of Beer/Light Wine in a Dry County carries a maximum penalty of ninety (90) days incarceration and/or a \$500.00 fine. ABC Enforcement's findings will be turned over to the Lamar County District Attorney's Office. As with all cases the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

The Lamar County Sheriff's Department and the Lamar County Coroner's Office assisted ABC Enforcement with the investigation.

Chief Mark Hicks, ABC Enforcement, stated "The ABC Bureau of Enforcement expresses their sincere condolences to the families involved in this tragedy. It's our hope that our actions will prevent this type of tragedy from occurring in the future."

The Mississippi Alcoholic Beverage Control is a Division of the Department of Revenue.