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# Naperville educating bar owners on new rules



Naperville is implementing new bar regulations in the wake of several alcohol-fueled incidents in recent years including a 2012 fatal stabbing at Frankies Blue Room. (Chuck Berman, Chicago Tribune)

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Chicago Tribune

NOVEMBER 11, 2014, 9:33 AM

**N**aperville is easing into new bar regulations with an education campaign before cracking down in the new year, officials say.

"Generally we're telling everyone here's the new regulations, what questions do you have, how can we help you know what the new regulations are," Police Chief Bob Marshall said. "And we'll work toward enforcement once we're confident everybody knows what the new regulations are."

Under the new rules, bars citywide can no longer allow patrons to enter, re-enter or buy shots in the hour before closing. In addition, noncraft beers are limited to 22 ounces, down from 24 ounces, there will be no announcement of last call for shots, bars cannot reduce the price of alcohol by more than 50 percent and security guards must undergo additional training.

Councilmen approved the regulations this fall following an alleged drunken driving crash that killed two men and video of a downtown street fight went viral. They also have cited a 2012 incident in which an elementary school teacher was stabbed to death after stepping in the middle of a downtown bar fight.

Mayor George Pradel, the city's liquor commissioner, has sent mailings to bar owners in recent weeks detailing the new rules and he and Det. Mark English, who serves as liquor liaison, have personally spoken with some of the owners.

"They just keep saying just tell us what to do and we'll do it," Pradel said.

English said he has been fielding questions about people trying to re-enter bars near closing time for legitimate reasons like forgetting something inside or band members loading up equipment. His advice, he said, has simply been to "use common sense."

"I think once everyone catches on it will be fine and you won't have intoxicated people getting kicked out of one establishment and going two blocks into another," he said.

Some bar and restaurant owners pushed back against several of the proposed rules when they were being debated by councilmen, but Naperville Restaurant Association President Anthony Losurdo said on the whole he believes establishments are on board. Many of the new rules already appeared in the group's best practices manual.

He said the association will go beyond the training required by the City Council and offer a voluntary program with a retired police sergeant that will go into issues such as the role of security, liability and problem recognition.

In the new year, police will enforce the new rules through compliance checks and investigating complaints made by residents and businesses, according to Marshall and English.

Downtown cameras also will help police verify whether people are entering bars within an hour before closing. Police will be requesting additional cameras in the upcoming budget talks, according to Marshall.

"We're going to use technology to help us out so we don't have an officer assigned to every block to watch people coming in and out," he said.

Another piece of technology councilmen are exploring is ID scanners to help keep underage patrons from entering bars. Most downtown bars also started sharing information about troublesome patrons using a group messaging app.

During Halloween weekend, the first big test of the new procedures, police said there were no major problems.

"I think it's working," Losurdo said. "I really do."

Councilmen will receive quarterly reports on incidents like drunken driving, fighting and property damage and have said if they don't see improvements, they may consider closing bars earlier.

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