

# ABC 2 WMAR Baltimore

## Details of University of Maryland's plan to sell beer released

*Beers will be \$8; Local brew available*

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COLLEGE PARK, Md. - For the first time ever, fans will be able to buy a beer at [University of Maryland sporting events](#) this fall.

The school pulled back on original plans to sell both wine and beer at games so as not to over-complicate matters, said Brian Ullmann, associate vice president for marketing and communications.

Last month, the Prince George's County Board of Commissioners approved the one-year-long pilot program, allowing beer to be sold at Byrd Stadium and the Xfinity Center.

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Ullmann said the school looked to other universities that allow beer sales at athletic events before moving forward with its own plans, including West Virginia University and the University of Minnesota.

"I don't know that I would say that it's common, but it's growing," Ullmann said of the beer sales.

Ian Moritz, the Student Government Association's athletic liaison, said other schools that serve in the stadiums have seen binge drinking decrease.

"I think this a great step in making sure our sports culture focuses on the Terps," said Moritz, the Athletic Department Student Advisory Council chair and undergraduate student representative on the University Senate Athletic Council.

Beer sales will be close to \$1 million a year, with the university netting about \$500,000 to go back to student services. The money will fund counseling services and alcohol awareness programs.

Beer drinkers will be able to buy 12-oz. craft beers and 16-oz. domestic beers, both for \$8. The school hasn't decided on the brands of beer that will be sold, but the craft beers will be from Maryland breweries.

Customers can only buy one beer at a time, and the beer will be sold at concession stands, though not in the student section. Previously, alcohol has only been available in the luxury suites.

Sales will be cut off in the third quarter of the game.

"It's responsible drinking in a controlled environment," Ullmann said.

He compared it to the school's decision to permit tailgating on campus, rather than forcing students off-campus where they can party unsupervised.

"The dangerous behavior is binge drinking, and that's what we're trying to reduce," he said.

Not everyone shares the school's viewpoint.

Lisa Spicknall, program director of Mothers Against Drunk Driving in Maryland, said the organization is disappointed in the decision to sell beer at games.

"A majority of attendees are under 21 and the rest may be driving home... we expect that the university will have strict trainings on serving practices to make sure alcohol is not sold or provided to anyone under 21, urge adults to not purchase or provide alcohol to anyone underage and for adults to make a plan to designate a non-drinking driver if their plans include alcohol," Spicknall said in an email.

Two researchers with the University of Maryland's School of Public Health also cautioned against allowing alcohol sales at sporting events.

"There is a general principle borne out by many research studies that making any substance more available, including alcohol, will result in increased use of that substance," associate professors Dr. Amelia M. Arria and Dr. David Jernigan wrote in a letter last November. "We understand that the Student Government Association believes that selling alcohol during some sporting events will decrease problems related to excessive alcohol consumption. However, we disagree with the SGA's opinion because their view is at odds with this general principle."

After this year, officials will re-evaluate the plan, tallying alcohol-related incidents including medical transports and alcohol citations, Ullmann said.

Ullmann said about 200 workers have also been TIPS (Training for Intervention ProcedureS) trained, a training program designed to prevent intoxication, underage drinking and drunk driving. Workers are trained on how to spot someone who's had too much to drink, among other things, Ullmann said.

Ullmann said the school is still working out the details of punishments associated with underage drinking.

"UMD administration does a great job objectively evaluating itself and its policy," Moritz said. "As we review this policy change I'm sure we'll take the continued correct steps in improving the game day environment for all fans."