iStock/Thinkstock(BALTIMORE, Md.) — The alcohol industry may claim to look out for the best interests of consumers but a new study charges the opposite is actually true.

Researchers at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health claim the brief public service messages at the end of beer or liquor ads that say “drink responsibly” or “enjoy in moderation” aren’t very effective at all.
Study leader Katherine Clegg Smith contends the problem is that the alcohol industry doesn’t define what entails responsible drinking nor does it inform consumers about the health risks that come with drinking too much.

The Johns Hopkins team says that about 87 percent of alcohol ads that appeared in magazines from 2008 to 2010 did convey a message of responsibility. However, there was not once instance of what that meant or how and when to abstain from drinking.

Furthermore, the font size of the message was smaller than the ads’ slogans or taglines 95 percent of the time. In addition, the researchers felt that 88 percent of the ads advocating responsibility were actually promoting the product since photos depicted the fun people were having with alcohol.

As a result, health experts believe that the ads should contain “real warnings about the negative effects of excessive alcohol use.”

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