



News Release

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OLCC celebrates 75 years of responsible sales and service

PORTLAND, Ore. – The Oregon Liquor Control Commission is celebrating the agency's 75th anniversary. The OLCC was established in 1933 just days after the national repeal of prohibition. The Liquor Control Act, signed by Gov. Julius Meier on Dec. 15, 1933, gave the state exclusive rights to sell distilled spirits and fortified wine as well as the authority to license private businesses to sell beer and table wine by the bottle and the glass.

"The OLCC is committed to promoting public safety and supporting economic development," said OLCC Executive Director, Steven Pharo. "The work we do enables business people to be viable in their sale of alcohol while ensuring that customer interests are met in a socially responsible manner."

Over the years, the OLCC has seen many successes including the Alcohol Server Education Program, Responsible Vendor Program, Clerk Training Program, and enforcement of Oregon's Bottle Bill. Since inception, the OLCC has given back \$3.4 billion to taxpayers through revenue distributions to Oregon's general fund, Oregon counties, incorporated cities and other programs. Other Milestones in OLCC history include permitting women in bars, Sunday alcohol sales, and wine by the drink sales.

Foreseeing the repeal of prohibition, Oregon's governor, Julius Meier assigned Dr. William S. Knox and a special committee to study Oregon's options with regard to regulation of alcoholic beverages. The committee's final report, known as the Knox report, recommended the system we have now, which is a system similar to what Canada had at the time. The committee believed this system would provide needed revenue for state and local services as well as keep alcohol abuse at a lower level.

The Commission consists of five citizen Commissioners who are appointed by the governor to four-year terms, subject to Senate confirmation. Each commissioner represents a state congressional district and one is from the food and beverage industry. The Commission sets general policy and appoints the agency director who supervises OLCC's day-to-day operations.

For more information on the repeal of prohibition and OLCC's 75th anniversary, visit our web page at www.oregon.gov/olcc or our blog at <http://olccbog.blogspot.com>

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Promoting the public interest through responsible alcohol sales and service.

Key events in OLCC history

1844 – Prohibition vote in the OR Territory - first prohibition law in US, later repealed in 1845.

1914 – Oregonians vote to ban all liquor sales, preceding national prohibition by four years.

1930's

1933 – National prohibition ended. Oregon Liquor Control Act passed and OLCC created.

1936 – Enforcement Division formed to oversee liquor law enforcement and compliance.

1939 – Legislature adopts Wine Standards Act, giving Commission right to regulate wine trade.

1940's

1940 – Commission passes regulations prohibiting public marketing of liquor by brand name.

1941 – Hard alcohol restricted exclusively to retail establishments with full food service.

1941 – Moved from original site on E. Burnside to location on SE 11th.

1943 – Liquor rationed during WWII; OLCC acquires the Shawhan distillery in Bardstown, KY.

1945 – Oregon and Washington discontinue liquor production business.

1949 – The OLCC Education Advisory Committee created to warn people of alcohol abuse.

1950's

1951 – Five new classes of retail and wholesale license privileges created between 1951 & 1956.

1952 – Constitutional amendment to allow distilled spirits sales by the glass

1954 – Headquarters relocated from SE Portland to central warehouse and office in Milwaukie.

1957 – The position of OLCC Comptroller created to oversee all merchandising and finances.

1960's

1963 – Distribution of liquor profits modified to give an increased percentage to cities & counties.

1964 – First automated inventory and merchandise control system introduced in warehouse.

1970's

1971 – Bottle Bill adopted (enforced by OLCC) - "Oregon's most effective recycling system."

1973 – Legislature consolidates the convoluted maze of existing types of liquor licenses.

1974 – The conveyor system was installed in OLCC warehouse.

1979 – OLCC added 29,000 square feet of space to warehouse.

1980's

1981 – Number of Commissioners increases to five, reflective of congressional districts.

1983 – Last state operated liquor store converts to retail store contract agent operation.

1990's

1995 – Implemented bailment inventory control system.

1996 – Regulatory Division begins to conduct minor decoy operations throughout the state.

1999 – Legislative Assembly establishes the Hearing Officer Panel in Employment Department.

2000's

2000 – Retail business licenses consolidated to four categories. Responsible Vendor Program debuts.

2002 – Warehouse Management System is implemented to sort and track all of the products in the distribution center.

2003 – Information Services overhaul; Data Management System modernizes record management processing.

2004 – Enforcement Division resumed structured training for sworn enforcement personnel.

2007 – OLCC purchases the Wilhelm Warehouse (Milport) - a 107,244-square-foot facility.

2008 – New Minor Posting introduced; OLCC turns profits of over \$155 million per biennium.