

# Parent Alert: Four Loko



## 4 Loko In North Reading

In December, 2016 the North Reading Drug-Free Communities Grant Project Coordinator conducted a 5-store visit review of distributors in North Reading where Four Loko is advertised to be sold.

- The product is available in 4 stores, with one pending its liquor license.
- The 23.5 fl.oz. cans were available in 7 flavors at 12% alcohol by volume.
- The "Gold" product was also available at most stores and contains 14% alcohol by volume.
- Prices ranged from \$2.59 per can to \$4.99 per can.
- All vendors noted that they were popular products.

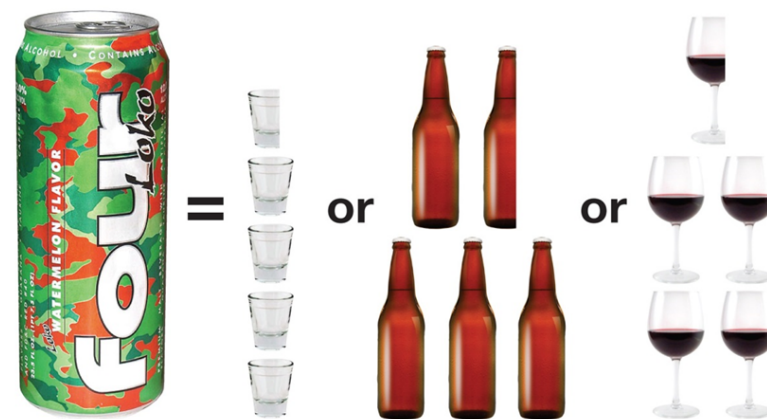
**What:** Earlier in December, the alcohol beverage Four Loko was linked to youth crime in North Reading. First manufactured about a decade ago, the "four" in the name stands for caffeine, alcohol (malt liquor), the stimulant guarana and the animal-derived stimulant taurine. In 2010 it was reformulated to remove the caffeine, guarana and taurine stimulants. In its current formula, the product contains 6% to 14% alcohol by volume and sugar.

**Concern:** Although the newer formula does not contain caffeine, the large can size is a concern. One 23.5 fluid ounce can contains 4.75 servings. In addition, the sugar content can be linked to type 2 diabetes, heart disease and can prolong the after effects of the alcohol. Some products also contain Red 40, which can cause allergic reactions in some people. In addition, the brightly colored cans were seen as marketed to young people. Although the manufacturer agreed to alter its youth-based advertising and marketing, cans are still seen as attractive to a young consumer.

**Just how much *FUEL* is there in one can of Four Loko?**



4 Loko products are sold legally in North Reading to consumers age 21 and over. Photo on the left was taken at a North Reading store.



One 23.5oz can of Four Loko at 12 percent alcohol by volume contains the same amount of alcohol as 4.7 shots of 80 proof vodka, 4.7 bottles of beer or 4.7 glasses of red wine.