



Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on July 15, 2011

Midway, Ga., Police Shut Down Kids' Lemonade Stand

So the girls shut down their stand and are doing yard work and other chores to make money.

"They told us to shut it down," 10-year-old Skylar Roberts reported. "It's kind of crazy that we couldn't sell lemonade," said Casity Dixon, 14. "It was fun, but we had to listen to the cops and shut it down."

The stand had been operating just one day when the city's police chief and a deputy drove by and spotted it. Police Chief Kelly Morningstar said it was simply a matter of enforcing the law.



"We were not aware of how the lemonade was made, who made the lemonade, of what the lemonade was made with, so we acted accordingly by city ordinance," Morningstar said. "We had told them, we understand you guys are young, but still, you're breaking the law, and we can't let you do it anymore. The law is the law, and we have to be consistent with how we enforce the laws," Morningstar said.

The news generated a number of responses on the website, most of them hostile to the police action.

"This is one of the most ridiculous things I have ever heard! " one reader wrote in. "People who are supporting the actions of the officers are just as stupid as they are! I'm sure that the police were getting flooded with calls from the citizens of Midway about those kids running an illegal lemonade ring! I'm sure that the city council and the mayor told those officers, **YOU GO SHUT THAT ILLEGAL LEMONADE STAND DOWN NOW OFFICERS! NOT!**"

"The law is the law'... give me a freakin' break! " wrote another. "By the same token 'a stupid law is a stupid law.' ... Besides, in order to abide by the law, the girls would have to sell 200 glasses of lemonade PER DAY just to pay for the permits."

"This law cannot have been adopted to address illegal lemonade stands run by children." another correspondent wrote. "I presume the town council intended to control adult run food establishments, not children's lemonade stands."

But at least one person wrote in to defend the police action: "I'm sorry that everyone thinks that is such a bad thing. The kids are over it and everyone else should get over it as well. If you don't like it then go to the city council and have them ammend [sic] the law to allow exceptions — but there is nothing the police could do in this instance. This was a small issue and should have never been blown up. "

[The Freedom Center of Missouri](#) has published on its website a long list of actions taken in recent years by police or other local officials against children selling cookies, cupcakes, or lemonade. Last August Bruce Walker wrote in [The New American](#) that health inspectors in Mutlnomah County, Oregon, warned a seven-year-old of a potential \$500 fine if she continued to sell lemonade without a license. Earlier this year Girl Scouts in Savannah, Georgia, were prohibited from continuing their decades-old practice of selling cookies in front of the childhood home of the organization's founder, Juliet Gordon Low. After receiving a complaint, Randolph Scott, the city's zoning administrator, investigated and



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discovered the Scouts were setting up a table on the city sidewalk in violation of a city ordinance.

"I know it doesn't look good," Scott told the [Savannah Morning News](#). "However, other businesses won't care if it's the Girl Scouts or March of Dimes. They're going to say, 'Why can't I sit out front and solicit business?'"

Last month parents of children selling lemonade near the US Open at the Congressional Country Club in Bethesda, Maryland, were fined \$500 after their children ignored Montgomery County officials' orders to stop.

"This gentleman from the county is now telling us because we don't have a vendor's license, the kids won't be allowed to sell their lemonade," Carrie Marriott, one of the parents involved, told [WUSA](#) of Washington, D.C. "Does every kid who sells lemonade now have to register with the county?"

The youngsters were using the sales to raise money for research against pediatric cancer, but the size of their operation drew the attention of county officials. Jennifer Hughes, director of permitting for the county noted they were selling bottled drinks out of four large coolers under a 10 x 10 tent.

"This is not what you would see when you picture a typical lemonade stand," Hughes said. Traffic and safety concerns about non-permitted vendors streaming into the area for the U.S. Open lay behind the decision, she said.

USA 9 reported on its website that the sellers included children of two "Washington power families, the Marriotts (hotels) and the Augustines (Lockheed-Martin)." The ban on the lemonade stand was lifted and the fine waived when the group agreed to move the operation 100 feet back from the corner at the intersection where it had been set up.

"This is not a big bad bureaucracy coming down on little kids," Hughes said.

But not everyone was happy with the outcome. "This feels like a whole lot of government to me, " said Rene Augustine.



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