

For Immediate Release

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Retailers post \$25,000 in awards in string of liquor store thefts

Memphis — CrimeStoppers of Memphis and Shelby County announced today a special award up to \$25,000 for information leading to one or more arrests in a string of organized “grab and run” retail liquor store burglaries this year.

The extra award, which is in addition to regular CrimeStoppers felony awards, was raised by the Memphis Area Liquor Retailers representing dozens of store owners in the city victimized by the break-ins. Owners hope citizens with information on the crimes and thieves will call the CrimeStoppers tip line, 528-CASH (2274).

More than 40 stores have been hit since May 19 of this year, and a similar MO was used in each. One of the latest incidents occurred in the early morning hours of August 5 at the Buster’s Liquors & Wines store on Highland Street near Poplar Avenue.

The theft began when five cars with tinted windows and bogus drive-out license tags sped up to the store and more than a dozen individuals hopped out and began busting windows. Some individuals went into the store and filled laundry baskets, while others broke other windows to grab bottles on display. The break-in was over in minutes. Besides the physical damage of about \$10,000, more than \$15,000 in goods were stolen, according to Josh Hammond.

Two stores were hit two hours apart in late June. Masked men using stolen cars and wielding sledgehammers took about \$4,000 in high-end alcohol from Natalie’s Liquors in Cordova, then hit Kimbrough’s Fine Wine and Spirits on Union Avenue in Midtown, stealing about \$6,000 in goods.

Memphis Police Asst. Chief Joe Oakley said citizens should report anyone selling wine or liquor from a house or apartment, car or social media by calling CrimeStoppers or the MPD.