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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES REFERENDA May, 2012

With the recent passage of the various referenda regarding alcoholic beverages (“malt beverages, unfortified wines, ABC stores, and mixed beverages”), county officials have received numerous calls requesting information about sales, permits and the like. This is an attempt to answer as many questions as possible, and to direct questioners to the correct source for information on the rest.

The primary source of information for anyone interested in selling alcoholic beverages or merely interested in the topic in North Carolina is the North Carolina Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission [website](http://abc.nc.gov) (abc.nc.gov).

FREQUENT QUESTIONS:

[I own a small store or restaurant located in the unincorporated areas of Henderson County. Can I begin selling beer or wine now?](#)

[How do I apply for a permit to begin sale of beer or wine?](#)

[What do I need from Henderson County government in order to apply?](#)

[What is the difference between “wine” and “unfortified wine”?](#)

[Can I open an ABC store?](#)

I own a small store or restaurant located in the unincorporated areas of Henderson County. Can I begin selling beer or wine now?

No. A state ABC Commission permit is required for all sale of alcoholic beverages. There are various [types of retail permits](#) available. There are also special one-time permits and commercial (distribution) permits. [Applications and all required documents](#) for permits are available on the state ABC Commission [website](#).

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How do I apply for a permit to begin sale of beer or wine?

Complete the [applications and all required documents](#) for a retail permit, on the state ABC Commission [website](#).

What do I need from Henderson County government in order to apply?

While complete information on this topic should be obtained from the state ABC Commission, a retail establishment outside a municipality in Henderson County will need a completed [Inspection/Zoning Compliance form](#). You will need to complete the first part of the form before bringing it to the County offices. County government may be asked to comment, if it chooses to do so, on the issuance of your permit.

What is the difference between "wine" and "unfortified wine"?

From the State ABC Commission explanation:

Fortified wine means any wine, of more than sixteen percent (16%) and no more than twenty-four percent (24%) alcohol by volume, made by fermentation from grapes, fruits, berries, rice, or honey; or by the addition of pure cane, beet, or dextrose sugar; or by the addition of pure brandy from the same type of grape, fruit, berry, rice, or honey that is contained in the base wine and produced in accordance with the regulations of the United States. Unfortified wine means any wine of sixteen percent (16%) or less alcohol by volume, made by fermentation from grapes, fruits, berries, rice, or honey; or by the addition of pure cane, beet, or dextrose sugar; or by the addition of pure brandy from the same type of grape, fruit, berry, rice, or honey that is contained in the base wine and produced in accordance with the regulations of the United States.

Can I open an ABC store?

No. Only counties and municipalities in North Carolina can own liquor ("ABC") stores.