Inventory of the Dept. of Alcoholic Beverage Control

Processed by The California State Archives staff; supplementary encoding and revision supplied by Brooke Dykman Dockter and Jessica Moran.
California State Archives
1020 "O" Street
Sacramento, California 95814
Phone: (916) 653-2246
Fax: (916) 653-7363
Email: ArchivesWeb@sos.ca.gov
URL: http://www.sos.ca.gov/archives/
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Inventory of the Dept. of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

Inventory: F3718:1-375c

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Office of the Secretary of State
Sacramento, California

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Descriptive Summary
Title: Dept. of Alcoholic Beverage Control Records
Inventory: F3718.1-374c
Creator: Dept. of Alcoholic Beverage Control.
Collection Size: 14 Cubic Feet 3 Items
Repository: California State Archives
Sacramento, California

Abstract: The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) was created by Constitutional Amendment (Statutes of 1954, 1st. Ex. Sess., chapter 20, p. 274. Effective July 1, 1954, operative Jan. 1, 1955; Constitution Article XX, Section 22, as amended November 2, 1954) taking over the functions of liquor licensing and compliance which were formerly under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Equalization. The Governor appoints the Director of the Department, subject to confirmation by the State Senate. The Alcoholic Beverage Control records consist of 14 cubic feet of records and 3 photographs. They document the department's work to control and regulate the manufacture, importation, advertisement, licensing, and sale of alcoholic beverages.

Physical location: California State Archives
Language: English.

Access
While the majority of the records are open for research, any access restrictions are noted in the record series descriptions.

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Agency History
From 1933 until 1955, the State Board of Equalizations Alcoholic Beverage Control Division was the overseer of the licensing and regulation of the liquor industry (Const. Art. XX, Section 22, as amended Nov. 8, 1932. Effective Dec. 19, 1932). When an amendment to the Volstead Act, the federal legislation implementing the prohibition of liquor, permitted the return of 3.2 beer, the California legislature provided for the licensing of manufacturers and importors of the beverage (
Another act passed in the same session established a more comprehensive licensing system in anticipation of the repeal of Prohibition (Stats. 1933, ch. 658, p. 1697. Effective upon repeal of Prohibition [Dec. 5, 1933]). The Board's exclusive powers to license the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating beverage in the State were by Constitutional Amendment (Const. Art. XX, Section 22, as amended Nov. 6, 1934).

The Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control was created by Constitutional Amendment (Stats. 1954, 1st. Ex. Sess., ch. 20, p. 274. Effective July 1, 1954, operative Jan. 1, 1955; Const. Art. XX, Section 22, as amended Nov. 2, 1954) taking over the functions of liquor licensing and compliance which were formerly under the jurisdiction of the State Board of Equalization. The Governor appoints the Director of the Department, subject to confirmation by the State Senate.

Liquor control in the State is provided by the Department through the licensing and regulation of the manufacture, importation, and sale of alcoholic beverages. The Department investigates proposed licensed premises and the area surrounding it; investigates license applicants' background and record; determines the true ownership of the proposed licensed premises and collects license fees. The compliance function entails the detection, investigation and prevention of violations under the Alcoholic Beverage Control Act. The department directs major attention toward prevention of sales to minors and intoxicated persons, elimination of police problems and disorderly premises, advertising practices and fair trade practices. The Department maintains close relationships with local police departments and other regulatory agencies.

**Scope and Content**

The Alcoholic Beverage Control records consist of 14 cubic feet of records and 3 photographs. They document the department's work to control and regulate the manufacture, importation, advertisement, licensing, and sale of alcoholic beverages. The records are arranged into 6 series consisting of correspondence with the general public, correspondence with area, district and branch offices, and correspondence with other California state agencies, documentation on alcohol advertising practices, subject files, and photographs. Of particular interest in the subject files may be material concerning the reinstatement of licenses confiscated from persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II. This agency is still active and future accruals are expected.

Many records of the Board of Equalizations Alcoholic Beverage Control Division are included in this record group because the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control made them part of their records. The records of the two agencies are difficult to separate without fragmenting the records and destroying their integrity.

**Indexing Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the archive's online public access catalog.

- Alcohol -- Law and legislation
- Alcoholic beverage industry

**Related Collections at the California State Archives**

Information of the review of the Alcoholic Beverage Control department's decisions involving the revocation, suspension or denial of licenses can by found in the separate but related agency, Alcoholic Beverage Control Appeals Board Records, F3718.376-464a.

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**Series 1 Public Correspondence 1951-1973**

- **Physical Description:** 153 file folders
- **Arrangement**
  - Arranged chronologically by year and then alphabetically by correspondent.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - Letters received and copies of letters sent, memoranda, telegrams, minutes of meetings relating to the day-to-day activities of the Department. Correspondence with the general public has been sampled, with letters "H" and "S" retained. Subjects include requests for licensing information, complaints about alleged violations by licensee, referrals to and from other agencies, such as to the Board of Equalization about tax matters, requests by salvage companies to sell damaged goods.
### Series 2: Area, District, and Branch Office Correspondence 1951-1973

- **Physical Description:** 81 file folders
- **Arrangement**
  - Arranged area, district, or branch, and then chronologically by date.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - Correspondence with area, district, and branch offices includes bulletins explaining policies, reports of enforcement activities, minutes of staff meetings, field reports by enforcement officers, suggestions for improvement of operations, and reports of training activities.

### Series 3: Correspondence with Other State Agencies 1951-1973

- **Physical Description:** 13 file folders
- **Arrangement**
  - Arranged alphabetically by name of agency and then chronologically by date written.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - Includes material reflecting Alcohol Beverage Control's role in civil defense and disaster plans, referrals from the Governor's Office for answers to citizen's complaints, minutes of meetings of the Governor's Council on Alcohol Problems (1966-1968), Attorney General's opinions concerning department rules, and reports to the Department of Motor Vehicles concerning fake or altered driver's licenses.

### Series 4: Advertising Practices Correspondence 1941-1958

- **Physical Description:** 31 file folders
- **Arrangement**
  - Arranged chronologically by date.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - Correspondence sent to and received from advertising agencies, distributors, and manufacturers concerning the legality of proposed newspaper ads, display cases, and novelties (such as napkins, matches and bottle-openers, signs, and other advertising schemes).

### Series 5: Subject Files 1938-1970

- **Physical Description:** 96 file folders
- **Arrangement**
  - Arranged alphabetically by subject and then chronologically thereunder.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - Correspondence, legal briefs, memoranda, reports including material concerning the reinstatement of licenses confiscated from persons of Japanese ancestry during World War II (1951-1959), the importation of alcoholic beverages into California, minutes of meetings of the Senior Armed Forces Disciplinary Control Board in San Francisco concerning placing of premises off-limits, fingerprinting procedures, the seizure of illicit stills, and the problems of identification cards for non-drivers.

### Series 6: Photographs 1938-1970

- **Physical Description:** 3 items
- **Arrangement**
  - Arranged chronologically by date.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - Includes one black and white photographic print showing the destruction of seized liquor in the Stockton District, July 13, 1938; one black and white photographic print showing a seized illicit still, Feb. 23, 1939; and one black and white photographic print showing Department Director Edward J. Kirby and Assistant Director John J. Canny publicizing a new program of prevention of sales to minors, 1970.