Partying Without the Police

Have a good and safe time at your party, minus the hassles …

CITY/TOWN NOISE ORDINANCES:
Take time to get a handle on the complete city ordinance under “community resources” at http://www.govrelations.cornell.edu/community, which also includes a noise permit application. The ordinance details several definitions, provisions and penalties. Some representative language: Prohibits unreasonable noise between 10 p.m. and 7:30 a.m. First-time violators of the ordinance face up to a $500 fine or imprisonment of not more than 15 days, and not less than a $100 fine or 25 hours of community service. The fine may be levied against any or all residents in a house or apartment and penalties increase for repeat offenders. The Town of Ithaca has a similar ordinance. It may be found at www.town.ithaca.ny.us. Type “noise ordinance” in the search field.

OPEN CONTAINER LAW:
It's illegal to carry an open container of alcohol on city sidewalks, streets and parks. First-time violators face up to a $250 fine or imprisonment of not more than 15 days, and not less than a $100 fine or 25 hours of community service.

STATE LAWS ON HOUSE PARTIES:
• Persons under 21 are prohibited from possessing any alcoholic beverage with the intent to consume. Violators are subject to a fine of up to $50 per offense plus 30 hours of community service and the cost for completion of an alcohol awareness program.
• It is a Class A misdemeanor to give an alcoholic beverage to anyone under the age of 21. Penalties for violation may result in jail term of up to one-year and/or a fine of up to $1000.
• No person shall sell or offer for sale any alcoholic beverage without obtaining the appropriate license. This is also a Class A misdemeanor, but in addition to the above-noted penalties, a violator may be fined two times the county's liquor license fee, totaling several thousand dollars. CIVIL LIABILITY: If someone drinks at your party and hurts someone afterward, (while drinking driving, etc.,) you can be sued.

THE BOTTOM LINE to partying without the police
1. It's your responsibility to control yourself and your guests.
2. Avoid overcrowding that might result in blocked exits or a porch collapse. Too many cars could block your street and fire, police or medical units in an emergency. And overcrowding can lead to "outdoor bathroom facilities," another finable offense.
3. If someone is incoherent or passed out and can't be roused, don't just let them sleep it off. Alcohol poisoning can be fatal. Call 911 for help in this instance and in other emergencies.

IF YOU'RE HOSTING in the coming days:
Be a good friend and neighbor. Party without the police and have a safe, successful event. This is a great time of year!