SU students will get no warnings
Police unveil safety, alcohol initiatives

By Kristen M. Schmidt, Daily Times Staff Writer

SALISBURY — No warnings.

That’s an idea that should be deeply impressed in Salisbury University students’ minds, Salisbury Police Department officials said Friday while unveiling new safety and alcohol-abuse initiatives.

“There will be no warnings for any crime associated with alcohol,” Chief Allan Webster said. “We’re not looking to have an adversarial relationship with the university.”

However, police do want to combat drunken driving, date rape and petty theft on and near campus, he said.

Several students were arrested in April and May, following parties during which bottles reportedly were thrown at officers and patrol cruisers were damaged by flying debris. The incidents led school, city and police officials to rethink their approach to students’ out-of-class activities.

University officials said they agree with the police department’s goals, and they said there has been an open dialogue during the summer between the two institutions.

“We want to to work in every way we can with the students and with the town and with all of our own resources to minimize risks,” said Carol Williamson, vice president for student affairs at Salisbury University. “We know how to be good neighbors, and we’ll help students make good decisions.”

Among the initiatives announced by city police:

• Undercover officers will be stationed in liquor stores and in parking lots, looking for underage buyers and of-age people buying alcohol for minors.

• Property owners or managers are encouraged to communicate more with student tenants.

• Parking ordinance enforcement will get tougher. Police said the most common complaints have been blocked driveways and cars parked on the wrong side of the road.

“We want a safe, quiet session this year,” Webster said. “I understand they’re going to have parties. But people live here year-round. It messes up the tranquility of the neighborhood.”

Police also will try to make the temporary residents care about the local community and think of it as home.
Students found guilty of alcohol violations — for instance, drinking underage — and who are sentenced to community service will be forced to serve those service hours in Salisbury. Before, students could perform the community service in their own hometowns.

“It’s a way I think they have a stake in the community,” Webster said.

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