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**CONTACT:** Aaron Rummage

**OFFICE:** 615-741-7628

**TABC Requests FedEx, UPS Cease Shipments From Benchmark Wine Group (CA)  
After Company Willfully Refuses Cease and Desist Requests**

NASHVILLE, TN – On Wednesday, April 22, 2020, the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission (TABC), made a formal request to common carriers, FedEx and UPS, to cease delivery of illegal alcohol from Benchmark Wine Group located at 445 Devlin Road, Napa, CA 94558 into the state of Tennessee. TABC Director, Russell Thomas, informed the full panel of TABC commissioners of the request during a public commission meeting held on Thursday, April 23.

After TABC investigations uncovered illegal alcohol shipments, which Benchmark Wine Group was responsible for within the state, TABC requested company officials cease and desist all illegal shipping activities in Tennessee. However, the cease and desist requests were officially denied by company counsel through written correspondence received on April 13, 2020. "Occasionally we discover an unlicensed business shipping alcohol. We normally send them a letter and they stop shipping or apply for a license if eligible. However, it is very rare for a company to refuse our requests and to continue knowing and intentional illegal shipping," said Thomas.

The investigations included a January 2020 controlled purchase made by TABC agents and discovery of over 240 separate illegal Benchmark shipments occurring between July 2018 and July 2019. The shipments were recorded on official Tennessee Department of Revenue common carrier reports. TABC agents and legal staff routinely analyze shipping data and monitor internet activity to curtail illegal alcohol shipments in Tennessee. Shipping alcohol illegally in Tennessee violates multiple statutes including felony criminal offenses.

Over the last 12 months, the TABC has increasingly worked with FedEx and UPS to stop illegal shipping activity within the state. The TABC allocates appropriate agency resources to ensure businesses sell and ship in a manner consistent with state law. Staff routinely conducts educational outreach and provides one-on-one training when requested to promote compliance.

"The TABC has worked with many businesses in recent months to assure compliance with our laws regarding the shipment of alcohol. Most businesses have been very cooperative. Willful disregard of Tennessee alcohol laws will not be tolerated by the agency. We are going to continue to investigate and prosecute further violations," Thomas said.

For more information about the Tennessee Alcoholic Beverage Commission, please visit [www.tn.gov/abc](http://www.tn.gov/abc).

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