

Arrests

Continued from page 1A
scattered that it was very difficult to contain with only a few officers."

Arrests were hard to make. "You have to have probable cause to make an arrest," Stout said. "By the time so many of them were scattered, although you can see the aftermath and smell marijuana [without physical evidence], it is very difficult to have reasonable suspicion to detain anyone."

Drew Mulhare, vice president of operations for Ford's Colony, said he's strengthening internal policies to thwart teen parties.

"We are talking to the board of directors and suggesting procedural changes," Mulhare said. "We're still trying to evaluate how we could have reacted better and make sure we do that in the future."

Mulhare insisted that Ford's Colony security's response to the party was appropriate. The breakdown came when a written guest list of 42 people submitted to the facilities manager was not provided to security. To compound matters, the hosts provided the gate that night with brochures to be given to partygoers, essentially letting anyone in.

"We think there was a breakdown in communications and procedures that we intend to address very strongly," Mulhare said.

More — *The underage tipline is 4-SOBFRN (476-2736). Tips on underage drinking parties should include the date, time and location of the planned party. For more on the*

Tipline might have blocked teen party

By Amanda Kerr

Parents are wondering how that teen drinking party in Ford's Colony could have been prevented.

A tipline for underage drinking launches this week as a means of preventing such parties in the first place. The tipline is underwritten by the Historic Triangle Substance Abuse Coalition.

Gina de peralta Thorne of the coalition said, "We want to create awareness that the community can get involved and that it's not just the school's responsibility or a law enforcement officer's responsibility" to prevent underage drinking.

Gated communities such as Ford's Colony, Governor's Land, Stonehouse and Kingsmill have all agreed to participate in the tipline.

Once a tip is received, it will be filtered to the appropriate law enforcement agency. A security or police officer will follow up on the tip by phone or a home visit.

Officers will offer literature on the legal ramifications of underage possession and the consequences adults face for hosting an underage drinking party.

Thorne stressed that the tipline is anonymous and is a non-punitive measure aimed at prevention instead of prosecution. "We are wanting to head it off before it starts," she said. "Teens who are not drinking can't get in trouble."

Deputy Chief Stan Stout said of the Ford's Colony party, "Had we been notified a little sooner before it got to the magnitude that it did, we might have been able to better prevent it from getting out of hand."

The earlier the better. "When the first officer showed up, there were cars all over the place and kids running in different directions," Stout said. "Once police started arriving, so many of them were

What we need

See Arrests, page 13A