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Remember one year ago when a portion of the Lubbock community thought Lubbock would be in ruins if it went wet? One year later we're still standing. In fact, DWIs are actually down and crime statistics haven't shown a major jump.

Many people who opposed package sales inside the city have had their lives devastated because of alcohol. We understand they'll never be happy about its expanded availability. And they have reasons not to be happy if they've lost a friend or loved one or were battered or otherwise mistreated by an alcohol abuser. But at least at this point, fears of Lubbock going to the area supervised by Satan haven't materialized.

Much of the debate last year over alcohol sales focused on concern about crime going up — especially underage drinking, drunken driving and violent crimes such as assaults and domestic violence, reported the A-J's Robin Pyle.

There hasn't been a significant increase in crime and the police department hasn't changed its enforcement strategies over the past year, according to Lubbock Police Sgt. Tommy Mora.

- Police made 531 DWI arrests since alcohol sales started compared to 579 for the same time period before, according to police records.
- Alcohol has been confirmed in 10 traffic fatalities since September 2009, although it's suspected in three more cases. A total of 13 people died during the same time period the year before.
- Alcohol-related minor citations were down some in the past year, 662 compared to 798, according to Municipal Court records.
- The number of domestic violence victims continues to increase, but local shelter officials aren't pointing fingers at alcohol sales.

"We really haven't had any big uptick in problems," said Sgt. Michael Lockhart, a regional spokesman for the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission. "We're actually doing very well (when it comes to compliance by businesses)."

Texas Tech campus also hasn't seen increased issues with crime or alcohol-related incidents in the last year. "It's not really impacted us," said Col. Kenny Evans, Texas Tech Police spokesman. "We've not seen a significant increase."

It just goes to show, we can venture out of our comfort zone from time to time and still survive in the world. And the economy has been helped. There are now 161 stores, not including bars and restaurants, that have permits to sell alcohol. We survived.

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