



**Women in Recovery call for deceptive marketing practices to end, and request warning label on alcohol include cancer risks.**

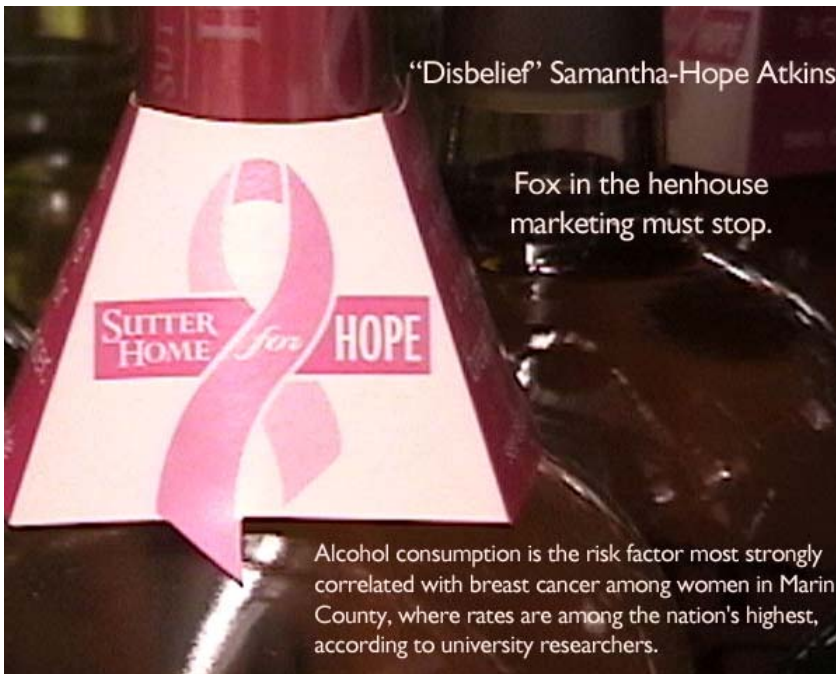
#### **Recovering Women Speak out**

“As a recovering alcoholic with 12 years of recovery, I am shocked to find alcohol products promoting awareness of breast cancer when the very consumption of alcohol has been shown in more than 50 Federal studies, to be a cause of breast cancer. The lack of warning labels and education in the community hide the risks, leaving women very unaware, and to become additional victims of this predatory in nature, alcohol industry. More than 50 U.S. studies have identified alcohol consumption as a risk in increasing cancer in women. Now as a recovering alcoholic I like millions of other women, must face my own history of alcohol consumption, along with the added risks of their seductive marketing, a known risk related to alcoholic relapse rates.

Sutter Homes promotes “Breast Cancer Awareness”, but does not properly warn women that they are substantially increasing their risk for cancer by consuming their alcohol products. It is interesting that labeling costs related to promotion of their product do not seem to harm this industry, which has been their primary claim in opposition to past efforts requesting proper healthcare warning label changes.

#### **Research Links Alcohol use and Abuse with Cancer**

One recent report, shows alcohol consumption is the risk factor most strongly correlated with breast cancer among women in Marin County, CA, where rates are among the nation's highest,



according to university researchers.

This recent report is published at [www.breast-cancer-research.com/home](http://www.breast-cancer-research.com/home)

Alcohol has been attributed, as a cause of cancer dating back to 1988 research is clear-  
**\*\*Epidemiologic investigations have provided definitive evidence that the drinking of alcoholic beverages can induce cancer in humans (IARC, 1988).**

**\*\*Two large cohort studies involving nearly 600,000 women detected a 20 to 30 percent excess of breast cancer associated with consumption of about one drink per day, with 60 to 70 percent excesses among heavy drinkers (Colditz et al., 1990; Garfinkel et al., 1988). Promoting**

### **Unregulated Alcohol Industry**

One Facilitator of a support group for women recently diagnosed with breast cancer in Marin County commented that the findings were another case of “blaming the victims” according to an article published by the SFGate.com online newspaper.

In truth, how could women ever be “at fault”? There is no health-warning label indicating the risks related to alcohol consumption and cancer. Educating Americans, on risks related to alcohol consumption is necessary if consumers wish to make an educated choice related to consuming alcohol. Removing this veil of blame from the unaware, uneducated consumer should be our priority. Much like the alcohol addict has been blamed for their disease of alcoholism, there are others experiencing the consequences of alcohol consumption and the blame for which they do not deserve. The Alcohol industry has gone out of its way to derail such labeling efforts (Attempt to add warning labels related to risks and family history of alcohol addiction in 1999) an attempt to post accurate health warning labels was ended by the powerful alcohol lobby in Washington, D.C. Obviously, any effort that would reduce consumption, and their ever growing profits, is not welcomed and fought by attacking and the character of any and all bringing such efforts forward.

The alcohol industry continues to promote it's breast cancer “give a ways” and “good deeds” to millions of women, who by consuming more alcohol are in fact putting their own lives at risk. This free offering a “free pink ribbon pin” for purchasers of their products is a clear example of the means to which this industry will go to raise revenue. These clearly deceptive marketing practices take advantage of a woman's fear of breast cancer, or past family history, or a desire to support awareness of a deadly disease for millions of women in the U.S. Unfortunately, encouraging the purchase of alcohol products actually deceives women into believing they are participating in hope for breast cancer awareness, when research clearly shows they are simply increasing their own individual risks of cancer, by consuming more alcoholic beverages. Increase alcohol consumption in participating in the alcohol industries promotion to reduce in hopes of supporting breast cancer awareness.

Sutter Homes is using their promotion to sell their product, even though research has proven alcohol is a cause of breast cancer. This is a deceptive marketing practice intended to solicit and build consumer loyalty, increase revenues and profits, and shareholder value, which this industry has a strong history of fighting to increase. “The alcohol industry is not in the business of giving away their revenues, so we must assume it is financially a profitable effort for their company,” Atkins said.



### **Promoting a Carcinogen, and no education, information or warning to the public.**

To add insult to injury, there is no health-warning label on alcohol products to educate the consumer about the substantial cancer risk increases related to consumption of alcohol, a known carcinogen, nor is information available about decreasing risks by decreasing consumption.

**\*\*Moderation of intake is the key to prevention of alcohol-induced cancer. Because many of the cancers induced by alcohol result from heavy**

**consumption, reducing levels of consumption will considerably lessen the risk.**

### **Alcohol Industry claims, “Know body reads those labels anyway”**

The alcohol industry believes labels are not effective, however the Sutter Homes website declares that 26,000 individuals replied to their products “necker” offering the free promotional item. It is clear their labeling efforts do generate a response, yet only their promotion label is posted, and no labeling to indicate risks incurred by choosing to consume their products.

**\*\*Risks of all cancers combined rise as the level of intake increases; the largest study shows a detectable increase in risk following consumption of three alcoholic drinks per day which rises to a 60 percent excess with six or more drinks per day (Boffetta and Garfinkel, 1990).**

### **Below are excerpts captured on the Sutter Home website related to the Breast Cancer Promotion**

“The universal symbol of breast cancer awareness, the pink ribbon, will appear prominently on our Sutter Home White Zinfandel bottles. We believe this will communicate a message of hope and remind women to take a moment for themselves and schedule a mammogram or exam.

Our neck collars and free pink ribbon pin offer will also return, giving you a chance to mail in for your own “Sutter Home for Hope” pin. “ We hope you will wear it proudly as a show of your support for our campaign. Look for our breast cancer awareness White Zinfandel bottles on your store shelves beginning in late August. “

For a third consecutive year, Sutter Home Winery is a proud national sponsor of the City of Hope and the Walk for Hope to Cure Breast Cancer. These walks take place throughout the year in 30 cities across the United States to raise funds for early detection, treatment, and research programs at City of Hope, one of the world's leading cancer research institutions. Last year, our partnership with City of Hope helped raise over \$2,600,000. Team of Sutter Home employees, distributors, retailers, and friends of the winery participated in nearly every walk. Consumers of Sutter Home White Zinfandel responded enthusiastically as well. We received over 26,000 letters from those who saw our neckers on bottles of White Zinfandel offering a free pink ribbon pin. Many of these generous people wrote heartfelt notes about their personal experience with breast cancer and enclosed unsolicited donations, which we were pleased to send along to City of Hope.

<http://seer.cancer.gov/publications/raterisk/risks61.html>

.\*\*William J. Blot,  
Ph.D