About 11 percent of the total Alaska population and 52 percent of the Alaska Native population live in places that restrict the availability of alcohol. We made those estimates by first counting the population in the 100 or so communities that have controls under the state local option law (or under federal law). Then we added the population in 59 other places that haven’t specifically enacted controls but also don’t have bars or liquor stores—because the difficulty of getting new liquor licenses in those places (as described on page 2) is in fact a control on alcohol.

We assumed the small percentage of Alaskans living outside established communities have no alcohol restrictions, although in some cases restrictions would apply.

We used 1990 census figures because they are the most recent available by race for every community.

Notes
- Communities shown as controlling liquor through the state local option law are from the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board’s Schedule of Local Option Communities, February 4, 1997.
- Metlakatla, Venetie, and Arctic Village control liquor traffic under federal law. Other Native communities that have not held local option elections may also be asserting their right to control alcohol through IRA tribal councils, but we do not have enough information to designate them on the map.
- Communities shown as having bars, liquor stores, or both are from the Alcoholic Beverage Control Board’s report, Liquor License by Borough/License Class, March 5, 1996. These are licenses to sell hard liquor. There are additional places not shown on the map that sell liquor. These include remote lodges with seasonal liquor licenses; bars or liquor stores on highways; and restaurants with licenses to sell beer and wine only.
- The option of having a community liquor license for a city-operated store or bar is available only to incorporated places, because it requires a city government to run it. Unincorporated places have the option of limiting sales to just restaurants, bars, or liquor stores.
- We omitted a number of smaller communities in the southcentral region and around Fairbanks from the map, mainly for two reasons: (1) unincorporated places within 50 miles of the boundaries of the Municipality of Anchorage are not eligible to hold local option elections; (2) some urban or rural areas are effectively part of nearby larger cities.