



ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) This part of summer is a time for patriotism. It's also the time new state laws go into effect across the nation. Fiscal years begin July 1 on most financial calendars, and a slew of state government spending regulations kick in each year on that date. Policy laws also hit the books in a wave, though states often mark their independence by enacting such legislation on their own time.

Among the laws set to take effect this year around the U.S. are new abortion limits, gun laws and technology rules. And one state, Wyoming, will start setting up a lottery Monday, leaving only a handful of states without a jackpot drawing. So as you get ready for Fourth of July cookouts and family gatherings, consider this roundup of recently passed Minnesota legislation:

TAXES: A batch of new taxes takes effect July 1. The state cigarette tax more than doubles to \$2.83 per pack. The state will require online retailers to collect sales tax on digital purposes, such as music and video downloads. The top 2 percent of wage earners will pay 2 percentage points more on a slice of their income.

ALCOHOL: Fee-based liquor tastings will be considered legal at properly licensed charitable, club or religious organization events as of July 1. Previously, taste-tests had been limited to wine only.

GAY MARRIAGE: Starting Aug. 1, gay marriage will be legal in Minnesota.

911 CALLS: Starting Aug. 1, calling 911 with a fake emergency will carry stiffer penalties, up to felony charges if someone is seriously hurt while responding.