

Tobacco Ads In Stores Influence Youth:

How Many Tobacco Ads Are Reaching Youth In Your Community?

Inside this issue:

- Rally at State Capitol **2**
- Close the Loopholes in MN Tobacco Laws **3**
- Tobacco Products for the 21st Century **3**
- The Rules May Change, But The Game Is The Same **4**

Even though buying tobacco products has long been illegal for people under 18 years of age, the battle among the tobacco companies for this demographic group has been—and remains—fierce. Because most smokers do not change brands once they have settled on their first steady choice, it's strategically important for manufacturers to hook them as early as possible. The result: 80-90 percent of smokers still start before their 18th birthday.

- *Unfiltered: A Revealing Look At Today's Tobacco Industry.*

(Available at unfilteredmn.org)

Tobacco manufacturers pay retailers to place ads inside and outside their stores in plain view of customers, and to shelve their products in attractive displays where they can be easily seen—in fact, where they can't be missed.

Called point-of-sale advertising, 83 percent of the tobacco industry's reported marketing expenditures in 2006 were on promotional payments to retailers and wholesalers, outdoor ads of the type featured at convenience stores and other point-of-sale advertising. This is a huge portion of their overall spending. It is important to remember that the industry doesn't make its marketing decisions by accident. If point-of-sale marketing weren't the most effective remaining tool in the tobacco companies'

arsenal, they wouldn't devote so much of their resources to it.

Point-of-sale marketing provides a huge financial incentive for store owners, and frequently the companies set their point-of-sale marketing tactics into stone through contracts with stores. This makes it difficult for retailers to make any changes in the display of tobacco products and advertising.

Smokers are kept hooked by this type of marketing, but they aren't the only ones

affected. Frequently, and despite restrictions on the shelving of cigarettes, tobacco products are displayed and advertised at the eye level of a child. Adolescents are also very vulnerable to point-of-sale marketing, and research shows point-of-sale marketing increases in stores known to be frequented by teens.



Help Us Count The Tobacco Ads In Your Community

During April and May we will be counting the number of tobacco ads in the retail stores in our communities. This is just the first step in a long-term project to work with local tobacco retailers to ask them to voluntarily reduce the number of tobacco ads displayed in and

around their stores.

We are asking for volunteers to help us count the ads. This will just take a small amount of time - approximately 15 to 20 minutes for most stores. We have developed a very simple process for counting the

tobacco ads that anyone can learn in a few minutes.

Won't you help us with this project? We encourage youth and adults to volunteer. We need 2 or 3 volunteers for each store. (To volunteer or get more information see p. 4 - How to Contact Us)

The Tobacco Industry hasn't given up. Neither will

Members of the Four Corners Partnership participated in the Day at the Capitol on April 14, 2010. The purpose of this event was to advocate for the Tobacco Modernization and Compliance Act of 2010 (*see p. 3 - Close the Loopholes...*) The theme for the day: "The Tobacco Industry hasn't given up. Neither will we."

Advocates from all parts of Minnesota met at the Minnesota History Center for workshops and keynote speeches from Representative Jim Davnie and Senator Scott Dibble, the lead authors of the bill. The event was sponsored by the American Cancer Society and the American Heart Association. ClearWay Minnesota was also played an active role in organizing this event.

The program at the History Center was followed by a rally in the Rotunda of the State Capitol. A series of speakers representing youth groups in Minnesota made it clear that they want their generation to be the first tobacco-free generation.

The Four Corners Partnership recruited participants from our four-county area (Dodge, Goodhue, Rice



Rally in the Rotunda of the State Capitol.

and Steele counties). After the Rally, everyone split into small groups to meet with their own Representatives and Senators. Advocates from the Four Corners Partnership met with Rep. Bly, Kath, and Draskowski; and with Senators Dahle, Parry, Murphy and Senjem. Unfortunately, Rep. Demmer and Kelly had last minute schedule changes and were not able to meet to keep their appointments.

It was an exciting and energizing day for all who participated.



Youth from Dodge County help out at Rally.



The group from Goodhue County on the steps of the State Capitol.



Advocates from Kasson-Mantorville and Byron area in the State Office Building.

Close the Loopholes in MN Tobacco Laws

A bill that will strengthen tobacco policy in Minnesota is making its way through the Minnesota House and Senate. The Tobacco Modernization and Compliance Act of 2010 is a common sense approach to closing the loopholes in Minnesota law.

Today's tobacco industry is evolving for the 21st century. New tobacco products are being developed along with new ways to market them. As always, the tobacco industry's strategy is to hook new smokers while keeping customers addicted.

Minnesota's laws that govern tobacco have not kept up with the rapidly changing tobacco products market. As a result, many products are either skirting existing laws or are not covered at all. The tobacco Modernization and Compliance Act of 2010 is a common-sense solution that will modernize Minnesota's tobacco laws, reduce tax evasion and reduce

youth access to tobacco products.

This Act will:

- Classify filtered "little cigars" as what they really are – cigarettes, subjecting them to existing regulations applicable to cigarettes, such as tax stamping.
- Ensure that new tobacco products are covered by existing regulation, such as not allowing them to be sold on the counter next to candy and gum.
- Prohibit the sale of e-cigarettes to youth.
- Fund a Minnesota Department of Revenue feasibility study on how best to collect taxes and fees on all tobacco products which would increase collections and reduce evasion.

Here in Minnesota:

- More than 5,500 people die every year of tobacco-related diseases.
- Tobacco use results in more than \$2 billion in health care costs.
- 17 percent or 634,000 adults still smoke.
- 28.4 percent of young adults (18-24) are tobacco users and smokeless tobacco use rates among youth are up nationwide.
- 85,000 middle and high school students smoke.
- The tobacco industry spends more than \$190 million every year marketing its deadly products.

Tobacco Products for the 21st Century

Little Cigars

- Look, feel and smoke like cigarettes but they have tobacco in the rolling paper which allows them to be called cigars and avoid cigarette taxes and other regulations.
- Much cheaper (about \$2.00 per pack) than a pack of cigarettes (about \$5.50 per pack).
- They appeal to youth because they are sold right on the counter next to candy and come in a variety of "youth-friendly" candy flavors like grape, strawberry and peach.



Snus

- Snus is a smokeless, spitless tobacco product. Small light-weight pouches filled with tobacco are placed between the gum and lip where nicotine can be quickly absorbed.
- Marketed as "Pleasure for Whenever"– suggesting snus can be discreetly used where other tobacco products can't.



Sticks, Orbs and Strips

- Made of finely milled tobacco that dissolves when placed in the mouth, releasing significant amounts of nicotine.
- Sustain addiction by being an effective substitute when a smoker cannot light up. Not currently defined in Minnesota statutes, therefore they are not taxed or regulated as a tobacco product.
- Look like breathe mints, tooth picks or breath-freshening strips. No restriction on youth purchasing these products.*



* These products are being test-marketed in several cities but are not currently available in Minnesota.

Electronic Cigarettes

- E-cigarettes are electronic nicotine delivery devices that simulate smoking.
- These products rely on a battery operated nicotine vaporizer that delivers puffs of nicotine vapor to users.
- Current law does not prohibit the sale of e-cigarettes to youth.



HOW TO CONTACT US

Goodhue County:
Tom Wolff - (651) 385-6142
or (800) 950-2142
e-mail: tom.wolff@co.goodhue.mn.us

Dodge County:
Kelly Corbin - (507) 635-6150
or (888) 600-5169
e-mail: kelly.corbin@co.dodge.mn.us

Rice County:
Ellen Unruh - (507) 332-6111 Faribault
(507) 645-9576 x 6111 Northfield
e-mail: ellen.unruh@gmail.com

Steele County:
Jane Nyquist - (507) 444-7661
e-mail: jane.nyquist@co.steele.mn.us



Address Service Requested

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
RED WING, MN
PERMIT NO. 378

The Rules May Change, But The Game Is The Same

Just because tobacco products aren't advertised on American television or billboards or in ballparks anymore, it's easy to think the tobacco industry has scaled back its efforts to attract and keep its customers. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

The hallmark of the tobacco industry is its ability to adapt to restrictions placed on it and its products. The tobacco industry has five key strategies:

1. Making tobacco use a part of our cultural landscape.

By making tobacco part of mainstream American culture, the industry makes its products more acceptable and accessible. And products that are seen as an integral part of American life are much harder to regulate or campaign against.

2. Using targeted marketing campaigns.

Creating campaigns for specific groups

has been an important strategy for tobacco companies. Men, women, youth, young adults and minorities are all targeted with specific messages and products from the tobacco industry.

3. Launching public relations campaigns.

The tobacco industry spends billions on community giving to improve its public image. It has even funded campaigns that claim to help tobacco users—its own customers—quit smoking. Through these efforts, tobacco companies position themselves as “good corporate citizens.” Such tactics also insulate them from criticisms and regulations.

4. Reinventing itself and its products to adapt to a changing landscape.

New, addictive products are being developed in response to social and cultural changes, smoke-free laws and health concerns about cigarettes.

5. Creating spheres of influence beyond the United States.

As the tobacco market in the United States has declined due to increasing public awareness and legal restrictions, the industry has set its sights on the developing world. Strategies that are no longer tolerated in the United States are now at work in these countries, where knowledge of tobacco's health impacts is not yet widespread.

Again and again, these strategies have been executed to the benefit of the industry's bottom line and to the detriment of health. Despite decades of momentum in lowering smoking rates here in America, we must still be vigilant about the tobacco industry's changing tactics.

To learn more about the tactics of today's tobacco industry visit:

www.unfilteredmn.org