



MADERA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT



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Madera County Public Health Department
Community Health Programs

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Survey Finds Sharp Increase in Availability of E-Cigarettes in Madera County

Madera, CA – March 8, 2017 – New research shows that in Madera County the availability of e-cigarettes has grown 37% since 2013. This finding is part of new research released today on the availability and marketing of tobacco products, alcohol, condoms and healthy and unhealthy food options in California stores that sell tobacco.

Today, throughout California, health advocates held 13 press events to release results of the scientific survey, which is the largest of its kind. It builds upon an initial study released three years ago (*March 2014*) and accounts changes in the availability and marketing of specific products during this time. Information was collected in the summer of 2016 from more than 7,100 stores in all 58 California counties including pharmacies, supermarkets, delis, convenience and liquor stores as well as tobacco-only stores.

“Overall, the findings show a continuing and alarming discrepancy in our county in the accessibility and marketing between products that promote a healthy lifestyle, and those that don’t,” said Alan Gilmore, Program Manager for Madera County Public Health Department (MCPHD). “Stores play a critical role on our community’s health, and this survey shows offerings and messaging are out of balance, tipping heavily toward unhealthy options. Our goal is to help re-calibrate the balance toward health.”

The survey found the following for Madera County:

- In addition to selling cigarettes, 90% of stores sell “little cigars” or cigarillos, but only 52% of stores sold fresh fruits or vegetables. What’s more, 93% of stores sold a popular brand of “little cigars” individually for under a dollar, less than the cost of a candy bar.
- 24% of stores sold non- or low-fat milk, but nearly 87% sell alcohol.
- 88% of surveyed stores sell condoms, but only 57% sell them on unlocked shelves.
- E-cigarettes saw a significant increase in Madera County in stores from the last time this survey was conducted, up more than 37%.

“The expanded availability of e-cigarettes are of particular concern and reflect the spike in use by teens and young adults in the last three years,” said Alan Gilmore of MCPHD.

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Another goal was to examine the accessibility and marketing of healthy and unhealthy products to youth. “This survey found that our community’s youth are inundated with unhealthy messages and choices. We need to change what information and options our kids are exposed to and work to surround them with healthy choices and messaging instead,” said Alan Gilmore of MCPHD.

The survey found the following for Madera County:

- Only 11% of stores advertised healthy products on their storefronts, but 79% of storefronts advertised unhealthy products. 76% of stores near schools have storefront advertising for unhealthy products.
- More than 52% of stores place tobacco products or ads in kid-friendly locations, such as tobacco ads at ‘kid-level’ (three feet or below) or tobacco products near candy or toys.
- More than 67% of stores placed alcohol ads at “kid-level” or near kid-friendly items such as candy or toys.
- 92% of stores sell flavored non-cigarette tobacco products, which often have kid-appealing flavors, such as grape, watermelon, chocolate, gummy candies and even breakfast cereals. Similarly, 100% of stores near schools also sell flavored tobacco products.

“The Madera County Public Health Department is committed to continuing to work with local health advocates and partners to provide accurate information and help make the healthy choice the easy choice for Madera County residents” said Alan Gilmore of MCPHD.

Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community is a statewide campaign formed by tobacco prevention, nutrition, alcohol abuse prevention and STD prevention partners collaborating to improve the health of Californians by informing them about the impact of unhealthy product availability and marketing in the retail environment.

Additional survey findings include:

1. Alcopops are sold at 85% of stores.
2. Tobacco chew is sold at 73% of stores.
3. Sugary drinks are sold at check-out at 55% of stores.
4. Of stores that sell alcohol in low income areas, 90% of those stores sell malt liquor.
5. Of stores near schools, 94% sell Swisher Sweets for less than \$1.00.

For state and county-specific data and more information on Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, please visit www.healthystoreshealthycommunity.com.

About the Madera County Public Health Department: The Madera County Public Health Department protects the health of our community by preventing disease and promoting health equity.

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