



SUTTER COUNTY HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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For Immediate Release

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New Survey Finds Alcohol and Tobacco Products Still More Available than Milk and Fresh Fruit

Yuba City, CA – March 8, 2017 – New research shows that in Sutter County 80% of all stores that sell tobacco products have advertising for unhealthy products on the outside of stores while only 12% have healthy product advertising, such as milk or fruit and vegetables. These findings are 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 its kind. It builds upon an initial research released three years ago in March 2014 and provides insights into changes in the availability and marketing of the studied 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 worrisome discrepancy in our county in the accessibility and marketing between products that promote a healthy lifestyle, and those that push unhealthy products,” said Dr. Lou Anne Cummings, Sutter County Health Officer. “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.”

Tobacco use in Sutter County continues to be a concern for local health officials. According to the California Health Interview Survey and the California Student Tobacco Survey, Sutter County adult smoking rate is 13.7% compared to the statewide rate of 12.7% and youth smoking rate is 22.7% compared to the statewide rate of 13.8% (California Health Survey, 2012-2014; California Student Tobacco Survey, 2016).

E-cigarettes saw a significant increase in Sutter County in stores from the last time this survey was conducted, up more than 11%.



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“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 Dr. Cummings.

Additional survey Sutter County findings include:

- 29% of stores sold non- or low-fat milk, but NEARLY 91% sell alcohol
- More than 68% of stores place tobacco products and/or ads near candy
- More than 78% of stores place alcohol ads near candy
- 89% 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, all of the stores near schools also sell flavored tobacco products.
- 70% of stores near schools have tobacco marketing in kid-friendly locations

Sutter County Public Health 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 Californians.

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.

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

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