

**For Immediate Release**

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**Survey Finds Yolo County Stores Sell and Advertise E-cigarettes, Other Unhealthy Products**

Woodland, CA – March 8, 2017 – New research shows that the availability of e-cigarettes in Yolo County has grown 60% since 2013. This finding is part of new research released by the California Tobacco Control Program 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 initial research released three years ago in March 2014 and provides insights into the availability and marketing of the studied products. 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, and tobacco-only stores.

“Overall, the findings show that many stores throughout Yolo County are promoting unhealthy products much more than healthy products,” said County Health Officer Dr. Ron Chapman of the Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency. “Stores play an important role in people’s health, and we encourage stores to consider selling and advertising healthy products, such as fresh fruits and vegetables.”

One goal of the survey was to examine the accessibility and marketing of healthy and unhealthy products to youth.

“This survey found that our youth are regularly exposed to unhealthy messages and choices. Children and youth need to see more messages about healthy choices which will have a positive influence on their health for the rest of their lives,” said Chapman.

**The survey found the following for Yolo County:**

- E-cigarettes saw a significant increase in Yolo County stores with 73% carrying them in 2016, up from 46% in 2013.
- 84% of stores sold “little cigars” or cigarillos. Of the stores that sold a popular brand of “little cigars,” – which come in kid-friendly flavors such as grape, strawberry, and chocolate – 80% sold them individually for less than one dollar.
- 80% of stores sold flavored tobacco products, and 75% of those stores were located near schools.
- More than 32% of stores placed tobacco products or ads in kid-friendly locations, such as at ‘kid-level’ (three feet or below) or near candy and toys.

“The expanded availability and marketing of e-cigarettes and flavored tobacco products are of particular concern and reflect the spike in use by teens and young adults in the last three years,” said Chapman. A recent ban on the sale of flavored tobacco products in the unincorporated cities is one of the latest steps that Yolo County has taken to protect youth from tobacco use.

Along with the availability of tobacco products, the survey also looked at availability and marketing of fresh fruits and vegetables, sugar-sweetened beverages and healthy beverages, alcohol, and condoms.

**The survey found the following for Yolo County:**

- Only 19% of stores advertised healthy products on their storefronts, but 67% advertised unhealthy products.
- 29% of stores placed alcohol ads at “kid-level” or near kid-friendly items. This percent did decrease from 2013 when nearly 70% of stores had alcohol ads in kid-friendly areas.
- Alcopops – flavored alcohol products often made to look like juices, sodas, or energy drinks – were sold in 80% of stores.
- Over 50% of stores placed sugar-sweetened beverages such as sodas near the checkout stand. In contrast, only 41% of stores carried fresh fruits and vegetables or low- or non-fat milk anywhere in the store.
- 80% of stores sold condoms, but only 59% sold them on unlocked shelves.

*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](http://www.healthystoreshealthycommunity.com).

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