

Smoke Free News

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Tobacco Advertising in Retail Stores

When Tobacco Ads Were Banned from TV, the Focus Shifted to Ads and Promotions in Retail Stores

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- You can't be in the convenience store business without selling tobacco products. That is the conclusion of a Minnesota convenience store owner who was interviewed for a video produced by the Minnesota Department of Health in 2007.
- Called "Tobacco's Hidden Influence on Our Kids," the film shines a light on tobacco advertising in retail stores and the negative impact it has on youth. Studies have shown that youth are more influenced to smoke by tobacco advertising than by peer pressure.
- The fact that the store owner agreed to speak on camera only if she wasn't identified and her

face wasn't shown, illustrates the power that the tobacco industry has over retailers.

Retailers can't compete with other stores that sell tobacco products unless they agree to participate in tobacco company promotions. All retailers pay full price when they buy tobacco products. When a customer brings in a coupon that lets them "buy two, get one free," the retailer gives out the free pack and then applies to the tobacco company to be reimbursed. If the retailer does not follow all of the rules laid down by the tobacco company, she doesn't get reimbursed.

The contracts retailers have with tobacco companies dictate how tobacco products will be displayed in the store and include requirements for in-store advertising. Tobacco company sales reps monitor retailer compliance with the contracts.

In effect, these contracts mean that the retailer gives up control over part of the store to the tobacco companies. A retailer who voluntarily reduces the amount of tobacco advertising in her own store runs the risk of violating the contract and not receiving payments from the tobacco company.



This Goodhue County store has a cigar ad in the door handle.



A slushy or a smoke? You can't miss the tobacco display at the exit to this Goodhue County convenience store.

I have to do the different things the tobacco companies require in order to get pricing. Signage, displays, what have you, are all necessary in order to ... get the discount so you don't price yourself out of the market.

Every year there's a contract that we need to sign ... you promise to put up the signs and jump through the hoops.

-Anonymous Minnesota convenience store owner
 Link to this video clip at:
www.4cornerspartnership.org/tobacco_marketing.htm

Dodge County Advocate Circulates Petition and Meets with Rep. Demmer - and He's Only In Fifth Grade!

When Jonathon Gangl, a fifth grader from Mantorville, learned about the new dissolvable tobacco products currently being test marketed in cities across the U. S. he was alarmed. He had heard that Minnesota law would allow these products, that closely resemble Tic Tacs or breath strips, to be displayed in a rack right next to the candy.

“This is just not right,” said Jonathon. Most fifth graders would have stopped right there, but Jonathon, who is the Dodge County 4-H Junior Leader, took action. He wrote up a petition demanding that these new tobacco products must be kept behind the counter with the cigarettes and other tobacco products. He started gathering signatures.

Jonathon was not the only one alarmed about these new tobacco products. A bill had been introduced in the Minnesota Legislature to close loopholes in our state’s tobacco laws.

The Tobacco Modernization and Compliance Act of 2010 was headed for a hearing before the House Taxes committee. Representative Randy

Demmer from Hayfield sits on this committee.

Kelly Corbin, the Dodge County Coordinator for the Four Corners Partnership heard about Jonathon’s petition. She contacted Jonathon’s mom and offered to help to set up an appointment to meet with Representative Demmer so that Jonathon could deliver his petition.

As it turned out, Jonathon, his mom and dad and his little brother Joel all met with Representative Demmer in his office on April 28, 2010. The meeting took place just an hour before the Tax Committee hearing for the bill.

Representative Demmer agreed with Jonathon that all tobacco products should be sold from behind the counter and not displayed right next to the candy. He signed Jonathon’s petition.

Jonathon’s family was in the audience at the Tax Committee hearing. They gave a silent cheer when the bill was approved to go to the full House for a vote. (*see Governor Signs... p. 3*)



Jonathon and Joel Gangl with Representative Randy Demmer. Jonathon (left) is holding his petition.



Representative Randy Demmer signs Joel’s petition.



Camel Orbs (dissolvable tobacco) compared to Tic Tac (candy).

Governor Signs Act to Protect Youth From New Tobacco Products

Adapted in part from a joint statement from the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association in Minnesota, Association for Nonsmokers - MN, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota, ClearWay MinnesotaSM, Local Public Health Association and HealthPartners.

Minnesota's leading health groups applaud Governor Tim Pawlenty for taking another step to protect youth from harmful tobacco products. On May 11, 2010, the Governor signed into law the Tobacco Modernization and Compliance Act of 2010. This will update Minnesota law to address new generations of tobacco products.

The bill had broad bi-partisan support in the Minnesota Legislature. The Senate passed the bill by a vote of 63 to 4. It passed in the House by a vote of 118 to 5.

The new law takes effect on August 1, 2010. It will apply existing state tobacco taxes and regulations covering

display and sale to the new smokeless tobacco products currently being developed and test marketed. These new products are attractive to youth because they are low-cost, come in candy flavors and sometimes resemble mints and breath strips.

Specifically, the Tobacco Modernization and Compliance Act of 2010:

- Expands the definition of tobacco products to include any product that contains tobacco and is intended for human consumption
- Requires all tobacco products to be sold behind the counter so they are not easily accessible to youth
- Prevents the sale of new tobacco products and e-cigarettes to youth.

Broad bipartisan support of this law ensures Minnesota will keep pace with the tobacco industry's aggressive marketing and ability to take advantage of legal loopholes. The Governor's signature is an important first step in protecting our kids from new and addictive smokeless tobacco products.

But our work is far from done. Tobacco products remain accessible, affordable and attractive to young people and the consequences are costly. We need to continue to advocate policy solutions that will reduce the harm of tobacco in Minnesota.

-David Willoughby, Chief Executive Officer of ClearWay MinnesotaSM

South Central College To Go Tobacco Free

The wave of college campuses in Minnesota which have tobacco free grounds now includes a college in the Four Corners region: South Central College with campuses in Faribault and North Mankato. As of July 1, 2010, students, faculty and staff will be greeted by signs saying "Welcome to Our Tobacco Free Campus."

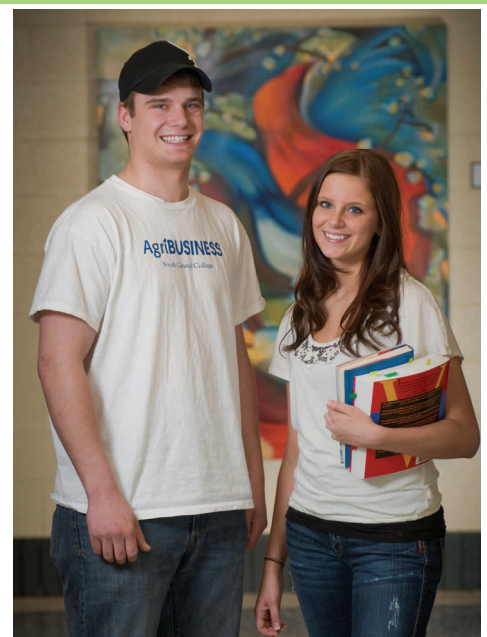
A survey released last fall showed that faculty and staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the new policy. One senior staff person who smokes noted that she has been trying to quit for years and she hopes that the environment of a tobacco free campus will help her finally succeed.

Citing the science of secondhand smoke, as well as ongoing concerns about cigarette litter, SCC President

Keith Stover said that is a high priority that "we have a healthier lifestyle on campus."

South Central College will support its campus community every step of the way, offering smoking cessation resources to staff and students, and ongoing communication with the campus community. The Four Corners Partnership and the American Lung Association, in partnership with the State Health Improvement Program are helping SCC implement its new policy.

President Stover says he has received many positive comments about the decision, and has been receiving requests to meet with other colleges in south central Minnesota who are considering tobacco free grounds.



South Central College students.

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Women Still Targets of Tobacco Industry

The Tobacco Industry has never hesitated to exploit the hopes and concerns of women. The Virginia Slims ads of the 1960's and 1970's resonated with the emerging femininity and freedom of women.

More recently, Camel No. 9 cigarettes were launched in 2007. The implied association with the glamorous Chanel perfume was obvious. Ads in magazines like Vogue, Glamour and Cosmopolitan described Camel No. 9 as "light and luscious". Not to be outdone, Virginia Slims introduced "purse packs" in 2008. "Purse packs" are about half the size of regular cigarette packs, hold "superslim" cigarettes and come in shades of mauve and teal.

Women's cigarette brands and their advertising campaigns are the result of extensive marketing research on the attitudes of women and girls. The tobacco industry uses this research to get inside women's heads. They understand how women view

themselves and the pressures they face. This lets them develop products and marketing strategies that appeal to the way women want to be perceived and the sensibilities that motivate them.

Are these marketing practices effective? The U. S. has the highest population of female smokers (23.5 million) in the world. China is a distant second with 13.5 million female smokers.

Another way to measure this is to look at lung cancer. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), lung cancer death rates among women increased by more than 600 percent between 1950 and 2005. Smoking causes about 90 percent of all lung cancer deaths among women. Since 1987, lung cancer has been the leading cause of cancer death among women, surpassing breast cancer.

While lung cancer rates among men are decreasing, they remain steady for women. Former U.S. Surgeon General

Antonia Novello commented that "the Virginia Slims Woman" is catching up to "the Marlboro Man." More than 178,000 women die every year in the U. S. from smoking related diseases.

