



A Newsletter for Idaho Tobacco Retailers Sponsored by Idaho Department of Health & Welfare

Contact IDHW's Idaho Tobacco Project at: 877-641-4468
ID Tobacco Project Website: <https://healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/providers>*
*Scroll down to the topic "Retailers" then select "Idaho Tobacco Project."

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Facts and Stats

What was the Compliance Grade for May 2025's state tobacco and electronic smoking device inspections?

Grade **A**

According to Idaho Code 39-5701, the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare must inspect each Permitted Retailer that sells tobacco and electronic smoking devices to ensure that it does not sell these products to customers under the age of 21.

How well did these Permitted Retailers comply with the law in May 2025?

- 173 Permitted Retailers were inspected. *
- 11 Permitted Retailers sold to the underage inspector.
- The compliance rate for May 2025 was:

93.64%
NICE!

*Non-minor Exempt Inspections where purchase attempts were made.

School's Out — Stay Sharp, Stay Compliant

School's Out — Stay Sharp This Summer

With school out for summer, teens have more free time — and your store might see more attempts by underage customers trying to buy tobacco or vape products. Now is the time to remind every employee: **check ID every time, no exceptions.**

A single unlawful sale can result in fines for the clerk and retailer, suspension or loss of the store's tobacco and electronic smoking device permit, and, most importantly, a loss of community trust. Staying vigilant keeps Idaho youth safe and **helps prevent minors from getting into legal trouble for possession.**

Who Are Idaho's Underage Inspectors — And Who They're Not

There's an important difference between an **underage inspector** and a typical teen who might try to buy tobacco or vape products:

✓ **Underage Inspectors**

Idaho's underage inspectors are not troublemakers or kids looking to get away with breaking the law — in fact, they are some of the most responsible and motivated young people in our state. Each inspector is carefully selected and must meet strict requirements: they maintain good grades, obtain parental permission, carry a valid Idaho state-issued ID, and complete specialized compliance training.

During inspections, they follow a very clear protocol: they never use fake IDs, they never lie about their age, and they are always accompanied by a trained adult lead inspector who supervises the visit. When they present their real ID, they are protected under Idaho Code 39-5703(4) and are legally **exempt from possession laws** because they are performing a state-approved compliance check. Their goal is simple: to help retailers succeed in following Idaho law.

✓ **Other Minors**

Any other teen under 21 who tries to purchase or possess tobacco or vape products **is breaking the law** and risks fines or other penalties for possession. By refusing the sale, retailers play a vital role in protecting these young people from making mistakes that could have legal consequences.

If You Confiscate an ID

Many stores have a policy to confiscate fake or borrowed IDs — that's good practice to prevent illegal sales to minors. However, if your clerk confiscates the ID of an **official underage inspector**, it must be returned. Remember that the underage inspector is acting under legal authority with **immunity and protection under Idaho Code** while performing a lawful inspection.

If your clerk confiscates the ID of an **official underage inspector**, the lead Inspector will identify themselves, show their official badge, and request the ID back immediately. Keeping their valid ID on hand allows underage inspectors to present it when asked, ensures clerks can properly verify age and refuse the sale, and guarantees the inspection remains legal and accurately documented.

If a clerk refuses to return it, local law enforcement or the Idaho State Police may be called to retrieve the inspector's ID from the clerk — though we hope that is never necessary.

We're a Team

Every inspection protects Idaho youth and keeps your store in good standing. **Staying vigilant — especially during busy summer months** — helps prevent illegal sales and keeps local teens from getting in legal trouble for possession.

Thank you for your dedication to keeping Idaho's kids safe and your business compliant.

This Month's Health Highlight: Why Compliance Is Protection

E-Cigarettes Are Not Harmless

- **No tobacco product is safe — including e-cigarettes.**
- E-cigarettes can contain **nicotine, heavy metals (like lead), ultrafine particles, and chemicals that can cause lung disease.**
- Most young people who use e-cigarettes report using flavored products, which can make them more appealing but still dangerous.
- Youth who use e-cigarettes are more likely to try traditional cigarettes in the future.
- **Checking ID and refusing illegal sales keeps these harmful products out of minors' hands — protecting Idaho youth from addiction and lifelong health problems.**
- Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/e-cigarettes/youth.html>

Prevent-The-Sale!

Idaho Tobacco Retailers have two resources for Prevent-The-Sale content: Visit Idaho's Department of Health and Welfare's official [Idaho Tobacco Project-Prevent The Sale](#) webpage for statewide information.

Visit Idaho Tobacco Projects interactive website Preventthesale.com for interactive and evolving content, including newsletter archives, information on IDs, and downloadable resources and documents.



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