

## Responsible Vendors Train Employees

By Cheryl Dudley

### Facts and Stats

#### “B+” Average for September

According to Idaho Code 39-5701 the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare must inspect each business that sells tobacco to ensure that it does not sell tobacco to minors. For September, 2004:

- ❖ 203 Vendors were inspected.\*
- ❖ 28 Vendors sold to the inspecting minor.
- ❖ The compliance rate for the month of September 2004 was 86.21%.

\*Inspections where purchase attempts were made.

### Prevent the Sale

#### Go to:

[www.preventthesale.com/Idaho](http://www.preventthesale.com/Idaho)

- Learn about the law
- Take the tobacco quiz
- See what the ID's look like
- Play the Game "Would You Sell to This Person?"

Any store that sells tobacco in Idaho is required to post notices that they will not sell to minors. Vendors are also required to check the identification of a person that tries to buy tobacco who appears underage.

Idaho has made great progress in reducing the sale of tobacco to minors through its education and enforcement program.

The Idaho State Police and the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare are partners in administering the minors' access law. Since 1997 the sale of tobacco to minors has decreased from 45% to 10.5%, a reduction due, for the most part, because of the efforts of retailers to prevent the sale of tobacco to minors, and the issuance of violations and fines to retailers who fail to follow the law.

### How to Prevent Fines

Responsible retailing demands the aggressive enforcement of Idaho law. This requires new and on-going training for sales clerks who sell tobacco. Clear-cut policies should be an integral part of the training process in order to prevent the sale of tobacco to minors. For assistance in training sales clerks, vendors might consider the following suggestions:

- Provide training on a regular basis. A weekly meeting where policies are reinforced and problems addressed might remind employees of their responsibilities as well as give them an opportunity to receive needed support. Role-modeling and play-acting potential scenarios that retailers might encounter can help prepare them to say “no” when they are actually confronted by a minor.
- Train employees to identify minors without using math. Remember that a green Idaho ID indicates less than 18 years of age while a red ID indicates 18-21 years of age.
- Make sure employees understand the consequences of selling tobacco to minors. They should be informed of the use of inspection teams and the importance of carding underage purchasers. Establish a model of accountability for retailers to ensure that training procedures are being implemented properly.
- Provide aids for employees that make preventing the sale to minors easy. For example, post the notice that you will not sell tobacco to vendors in a conspicuous place. Provide

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## How to Prevent Fines continued

calendars that specify the year customers must be born in order to buy tobacco. You may also place a reminder that a green ID indicates an underage customer.

- Visit our website for a trainer refresher course.

Remember that training employees on how to identify minors and refuse the sale of tobacco can prevent costly fines to your business.

### The Inspection Team

The Inspection Team is made up of an adult inspector, an inspecting minor, and an adult chaperone. Each member of the team is required to complete a comprehensive training program. Inspecting minors are under the age of 18 and are trained to never lie when attempting a tobacco purchase. If asked to show their ID, the inspecting minor will willingly show their valid Idaho state ID and will never present a fake, altered or borrowed ID.

If a clerk refuses to sell to the minor, the minor will leave the business and a congratulatory letter will be sent to the business owner. Often the clerk will not know that they have been inspected.

If, however, the clerk sells to the minor, the minor is instructed to take the product to the accompanying adult inspector for processing. In this case, the business has failed the inspection, the minor will leave the store, and the inspector will identify himself/herself, and issue the citation.

### Its Inevitable

Tobacco inspections are part of being a tobacco vendor. Training employees about how to prevent the sale of tobacco to minors and will help reduce the number of citations issued. Make a commitment to refuse minors access to tobacco products and help Idaho's children stay tobacco free.

Tobacco Permits expire  
December 31, 2004. Renew  
Permits by logging onto our  
website:  
[www.preventthesale.com/idaho](http://www.preventthesale.com/idaho)

Renewal is fast, easy, and free!

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#### WHAT'S INSIDE!

- ◆ Training Employees
- ◆ Avoiding Fines
- ◆ The Inspection Team
- ◆ Renew Tobacco Permits
- ◆ Facts and Stats

◆ PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO EMPLOYEES