

Prevent the Sale!

Newsletter for Idaho Tobacco Retailers

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Sponsored by Idaho Department of Health & Welfare

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The Desire To Be Virginia Slim

By Cheryl Dudley

Facts and Stats

“A” 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 2006:

- ❖ 33 Vendors were inspected.*
- ❖ 1 Vendors sold to the inspecting minor.
- ❖ The compliance rate for the month of September 2006 was 97%.

*Inspections where purchase attempts were made.

Prevent the Sale

Go to:

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?"

How Far Have We Come?

I won my first essay contest when I was in high school. The title of my essay was, "You've Come A Long Way, Baby," based on the Virginia Slims' cigarette slogan at that time. I remember being highly jealous of the slim woman who advertised the trendy cigarettes, and wanting to be like her. My essay, however, was all about the ill effects of cigarette smoking, and how bad it really was for health.

Few people knew the truth about me back then—particularly those high school teachers who gave me my essay prize money. I started smoking in the sixth grade, persuaded by my best friend, Karen, whose father owned a drug store with highly accessible cigarettes. We would sneak into the bathroom of the local service station over our school lunch hours and puff away—on Virginia Slim cigarettes.

I wanted to be cool, and to fit in. Before long I learned how to inhale the smoke and feel its calming effect. Next, the cigarettes replaced food, and Karen and I determined to become "Twiggy," as well as the Virginia Slim woman. We starved ourselves and smoked like crazy. We believed that we were invincible—and longed to be beautiful as well.

Lucky for me, I woke up when I was a senior in high school and quit smoking, mainly because my boyfriend, and future husband, hated smoking. But I was one of the few. Most addicted teen smokers don't quit.

The majority of the time, the decision to smoke is not made by adults. Sixty percent of smokers start by the age of 14, and 90% of smokers are firmly addicted before reaching age 19. In other words, almost no one starts smoking after age 19.

The addiction to cigarette smoking is linked to its ability to stimulate feelings of pleasure. Scientists have recently discovered that the nicotine in cigarettes raises the level of dopamine in the brain. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that produces feelings of well-being and comfort. For this reason, in addition to its appetite suppressant abilities, cigarettes are difficult to give up, particularly if the smoker began at a young age.

The incidents of lung cancer in women continue to rise, while lung cancer in men is on the decrease. Knowing the addictive nature of cigarettes, I am particularly sympathetic, but knowing the underlying reason why young teen girls even start to smoke is particularly disturbing: not only do they want to be cool—they want to be thin. Role models for girls continue to be paper-thin.

The once prevalent slogan, "You've Come A Long Way, Baby!" now applies to lung cancer risk among women. In many ways, women have come a long way. But in the smoking arena, the long way has been a downward spiral.

You've Made A Difference!

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 their 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, to the issuance of violations and fines to retailers.

Do you know what other factor besides compliance checks has significantly reduced the sale of tobacco to minors?

The answer: An increase in cigarette taxes.

Identify That Minor

Remember that all drivers' licenses have been color-coded since 2002. A green-coded ID means the teen is under 18 and it is illegal for them to purchase tobacco. A red-coded ID means the person is over 18, but under 21. This person can purchase tobacco, but not alcohol.

Tobacco Permits Renewal Time!

Tobacco Permits expire December 31, 2006. Be sure to renew your tobacco permit by going on to our website:

www.preventthesale.com/idaho

Renewal is fast, easy, and free!

Don't forget that tobacco permits do not transfer from owner to owner when a business is bought and sold. New owners must obtain a new permit in their own name. Go to our website to find out how to "Get a New Permit"

Leading Killer on the Loose

"Tobacco is now the world's leading killer. We have the proven means to reduce tobacco use, but policy makers are not yet applying these interventions. This initiative isn't just for the 20 percent of the world's population who smoke but also for the 80 percent who don't."

— NYC Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, in a statement announcing a \$125-million donation to fight tobacco use worldwide. / Mayor Bloomberg Donates \$125-Million to Anti-Smoking Group / Chronicle of Philanthropy, Tuesday, August 15, 2006.



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WHAT'S INSIDE!

- ◆ How Far Have We Come?
- ◆ You've Made A Difference!
- ◆ Identify That Minor
- ◆ **Tobacco Permits Renewal Time!**
- ◆ Killer on the Loose

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