

Prevent the Sale!

Newsletter for Idaho Tobacco Retailers

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Sponsored by Idaho Department of Health & Welfare

VOLUME 08, NUMBER 8 AUGUST 2009

In a Puff of Smoke: The Rising Cost of Smoking and the Growing Importance of Preventing the Sale

By Cheryl Dudley

Facts and Stats

“B-” Average for JULY

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. In JULY 2009

- ❖ 140 Vendors were inspected.*
- ❖ 27 Vendors sold to the inspecting minor.
- ❖ The compliance rate for the month of July 2009 was 80.71%

*Inspections where purchase attempts were made.

Prevent the Sale Web site

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?"

Ten Reasons Why Your Job is so Important to Idahoans

1. Research shows that **the average age when Idahoans begin smoking is 13.** Because the nicotine in tobacco is so highly addicting, **preventing a person from smoking before he or she starts is key.**

2. Each year more than 1,500 Idahoans die from smoking-related diseases. That's an average of four people a day.

3. For every cigarette smoked, a person risks losing 3 minutes of their life. Using that formula, for every pack of cigarettes smoked, a person potentially loses an hour of life.

4. A pack-a-day smoker reduces their life expectancy by 365 hours (15.2 days) per year, and 3,650 hours (150 days) over 10 years.

5. Annual healthcare costs in Idaho directly caused by smoking are \$319 million, which amounts to \$549 for every resident.

6. Even if you don't smoke, don't know anyone who smokes, and somehow have never been exposed to secondhand smoke, you still pay for the cost of smoking through healthcare costs.

7. The cost of tobacco products varies from state to state. Given that a pack of cigarettes costs \$6.00, the cost of smoking for a one-pack-a-day smoker is \$182.50/month and \$2,190 per year. Ten years worth of smoking costs \$21,900 (enough to buy an automobile).

8. Based on data from the Centers for Disease Control long-term studies, an estimated 50% of deaths among continuing smokers will be attributable to smoking.

9. Tobacco increases poverty and contributes to world hunger by diverting prime land away from food production. Tobacco and poverty are inextricably linked. Many studies have shown that in the poorest households in some low-income countries as much as 10% of total household expenditure is on tobacco, which is less money to spend on basic items such as food, education and health care.

10. Forty-six states and the District of Columbia restrict the placement of tobacco product vending machines. Idaho and Vermont entirely prohibit tobacco product vending machines, meaning all smokers purchase products from tobacco vendors.

Some Idaho Tobacco Legislation

Thirty-three states have enacted legislation that caps the appeal bond required for the damages portion of a tobacco lawsuit judgment. Idaho has set the level at a low \$1 million.

All 50 states and the District of Columbia have smoke-free air provisions restricting smoking in certain places. Arkansas and Idaho prohibit smoking in all restaurants. Some Idaho cities, including Moscow, are working on legislation to ban smoking in bars.

All 50 states and the District of Columbia prohibit the sale of tobacco products to minors. 15 states, including Idaho, require minors to attend smoking education/cessation programs in addition to or in lieu of other penalties for tobacco-related offenses.

Penalizing children has not been proven effective in reducing underage tobacco usage. Other methods, such as increasing the price of tobacco and utilizing compliance checks have been proven most effective. Idaho regularly inspects vendors for compliance.

Continued

Boise State University is becoming a smoke-free campus effective August 17. There will be literally no smoking permitted anywhere on campus. Coupled with the recent rise in the tobacco excise tax, smoking carries larger and more complex costs for the student smoker. Aside from information about health risks, new studies illustrate the implications of smoking and its influence on academic success. Beyond the negative influences in the classroom, smoking will play a role in taking the life of one in nine students who smoke, according to the Health and Wellness center.

The City of Moscow is considering banning smoking within bars. City officials say if passed, the ban would include a \$50 fine for violations. Fines would have to be paid within 2 weeks, and after a third ticket, violators could be charged with a misdemeanor.

New Federal Tobacco Taxes

A bill signed by President Barak Obama that went into effect on April 1 has increased the federal excise tax on cigarette by 62 cents, marking up the total federal tax on each pack of cigarettes by \$1.01. That's not counting state tax. The combined state and federal taxes on a pack of cigarettes in Idaho is now \$1.58—which is one of the lowest in the nation. Many states are also considering additional tax hikes in light of a sinking economy and less revenue

In the past, a 10% price increase on cigarettes reduced consumption by about 4%. This tax hike has prompted millions to kick the habit, particularly children—those who cannot afford the high cost of smoking.

"More lower-income people than higher-income people will quit because they cannot afford the tax hike," said Eric Lindblom of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

The generated revenue from the federal tax will be used to fund the Children's Health Insurance Program, providing medical insurance to around 4 million uninsured minors.

Idaho's Project Filter

Good news for tobacco users wanting to kick the habit. A free, four-week supply of nicotine patches, gum and lozenges to help stop using tobacco are once again available from the state's Project Filter program. The state ran out of the funding for the items in May and June due to a record-breaking number of Idahoans trying to quit smoking. Those interested in quitting can go online to Idaho.quitnet.com to register and get a free 4-week supply.

VOLUME 08, NUMBER 8 August 2009



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