



TEXAS
Health and Human Services
Texas Department of State
Health Services

Tobacco UPDATE

An Update on Tobacco Control
and Prevention Activities
in Region 6/5S

Issue 9

June 2023

Tobacco News



WHO Urges Governments: "Grow Food, not Tobacco"

The World Health Organization and public health advocates around the globe celebrated World No Tobacco Day last May 31st. This year's theme calls for governments to "Grow food, not tobacco". Top health officials from the WHO urged countries to move away from cultivating tobacco and instead shift to more sustainable farming that can help feed millions of people suffering from food insecurity. Not only does tobacco farming increase harmful tobacco products on the market, but it also causes disease to the farmers themselves. By choosing to grow food instead of tobacco, we prioritize

health, preserve ecosystems, and increase food security. [Full Article](#)

Canada, First Country to Mandate Warning Labels on Individual Cigarettes

Canada is set to mandate warning labels on individual



cigarettes starting August 1st of this year. They will be the first country to do so after also being the first to implement picture warning labels in cigarette packaging in 2001.

The warnings, which will be in French and English, include "poison in every puff", "tobacco smoke harms children", and "cigarettes cause impotence" among others. The new strategy aims to reduce tobacco use below 5% by 2035. "This bold step will make health warning messages virtually unavoidable" according to Canada's Mental Health and Addictions Minister Carolyn Bennett.

[Full Article](#)

Announcements & Events

[Cessation: New Opportunities to Help People Quit](#); **Virtual; 1:00-2:00pm ET Free; Registration Required.**

Upcoming Events

June 1

- [White House Cancer Moonshot Smoking Cessation Forum](#); **Recording available on link above.**

June 7

- [Unwinding the Unwinding: a Primer and Call to Action for Tobacco Control Professionals](#); **Virtual; 1pm-2pm CT; Free; Registration Required.**
- [Reduce Tobacco Use and Vaping Through Supportive Discipline](#); **Virtual; 2pm-3pm CT; Free; Registration required.**

June 20

- [The Public Health Impact of Menthol Tobacco Products](#); **Virtual; 11am-12pm CT. Registration required.**

June 27

- [Building State Readiness for the Tobacco Endgame](#); **Virtual; 1pm-2:30pm ET; Registration required.**

June 28

- [Medicaid Postpartum Extension and Tobacco](#)

We Want to Hear from You!

Our tobacco coordinator provides support to community stakeholders regarding tobacco prevention and cessation efforts. This includes conducting presentations on tobacco and other products, connecting partners to resources and other opportunities to promote tobacco cessation, providing technical support on creating tobacco-free policies, and many more.

If you have any needs regarding tobacco/vaping prevention and control or would like to collaborate on a project, please feel free to contact him. For any events and announcements that you want included in our next issue, please reach out. The monthly newsletter is issued every first week of the month so please send your announcements/events accordingly.

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June Spotlight

Are Vapes Safe?

This month is **National Safety Month** and what better way to increase our safety than to arm ourselves with knowledge. In this month's spotlight, we will answer the question: Are vapes safe?

One of the reasons youth start vaping is the claim that **vapes are safer than cigarettes**.

Surprisingly, this is true! Cigarette smoke contains about 7,000 chemicals that are harmful to your body including many or several cancer-causing substances. Vapes on the other hand do not have as much of these harmful chemicals. However, **safer does not mean that it is safe**.

Aerosol from e-cigarettes still contain harmful chemicals that can damage your body. Here are just some of the chemicals that have been found in vapes:

Nicotine- the addictive chemical in cigarettes and vapes. Nicotine can affect a youth's developing brain. E-liquid cartridges also contain a high concentration of nicotine that is fatal to young children. There have been reports of infants dying from nicotine poisoning.

Heavy metals- these are metals such as lead, nickel, or cadmium

that can be toxic and cause damage to your lungs.

Formaldehyde- a substance commonly used in preserving dead specimen. It can irritate your eyes, skin, and air ways. It has also been found to cause cancer.

Diacetyl- a common additive to e-liquid flavorings. This substance has been known to cause "popcorn lung" where it damages the air ways and causes it to be narrower.

Carcinogens- a more technical term for "cancer-causing substances". Several carcinogens have been found in vapes but further studies need to be made if these can indeed cause cancer in long-term vapers.

Aside from the harmful chemicals, other safety concerns with vapes include:

- It can be laced with other substances or drugs.
- Since it is electronic and contains a battery, it has a risk of fire or explosions.

Bottomline: Vapes maybe safer than cigarettes but they **ARE NOT SAFE**. Keep safe and don't start vaping. If you vape, this is the best time to quit.

The Texas Tobacco Quitline is FREE and can provide you resources for quitting, please visit this [link](#) or call: **877-YES-QUIT**

Latest in Research

Factors that Affect DNA Damage in Vapers



New research studying the DNA-damaging effects of

vapes compared to smoking has been published in *Nicotine and Tobacco Research*. The study took 72 participants, including vapers, smokers, and non-users.

Researchers used cells from the oral cavity to measure DNA damage in these participants.

Results of the study found that there was **increased levels of DNA damage in both vapers and smokers**. While the level of DNA damage between vapers and smokers did not differ, they found that the **damage level increased based on the amount of use in both vapers and smokers**. Among vapers, those who used pods, mods, and those who used flavored e-liquids had the highest levels of DNA damage. Nicotine content of the e-liquid was not a factor in predicting DNA damage. [Full Article.](#)

Are Tobacco Farmers Willing to Switch to Alternative Crops?

In line with the theme of this year's World No Tobacco Day, "Grow food, not tobacco.",

we highlight a recently published



study on the willingness of farmers to switch to alternative crops. This study was published in *Tobacco Control*. Researchers recruited 280 farmers from Lichuan, China to assess their willingness to accept a tobacco crop substitution policy.

Without compensation, most of the farmers were unwilling to switch to alternative crops. However, **if the government offered compensation, willingness to accept the new policy increased to 86.7%**. Older farmers and **those who have great confidence in the benefits of tobacco crop substitution tend to be more willing to accept compensation**.

On the other hand, those with more family members that are involved in tobacco farming are less likely to accept compensation.

This study gives us an idea of what factors need to be considered by national or local governments when implementing a tobacco crop substitution policy. [Full Article.](#)

References

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