



Fact Sheet on Display Bans

Banning the retail display of tobacco is an effective way to reduce smoking in young people.

What are display bans?

Even though tobacco advertising and sponsorship has been banned in Canada since October 2003, the tobacco industry is still able to promote cigarettes through highly visible displays that are found behind the counter in corner stores, variety stores and gas stations.

In 2002, just before tobacco sponsorship was banned in Canada, tobacco companies ramped up their spending on promotional allowances to \$77 million, more than one quarter of their total marketing expenditures.¹

Why are display bans important?

Research has shown that high profile cigarette displays can increase children's belief that cigarettes are easy to obtain and can help them to recall brand names.²

By allowing tobacco to be positioned prominently along side popular items such as chocolate bars, gum and candy products, we send the message to youth that tobacco is just another consumer product. This leads youth to believe that cigarette smoking is much more popular than it really is.

Banning the display of tobacco products at the point of sale should result in fewer young people who start smoking, lower smoking rates in the general population and fewer unsuccessful quit attempts.³

The tobacco industry knows that retail displays are a powerful promotional tool

Tobacco industry documents have proven that the industry knows that retail tobacco displays can increase tobacco sales through "optimal product exposure."⁴

Research studies have suggested that tobacco companies market cigarettes more heavily in stores where young people shop.⁵

Canadian legislation banning or restricting tobacco retail displays

Retail display bans are in effect or about to take effect in Nunavut (2004), Prince Edward Island (2006), Nova Scotia (2007), Ontario (2008) and Quebec (2008).⁶

Restrictions are currently in effect in Saskatchewan, Manitoba and the Northwest Territories.⁶

References

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- ⁴ Lavack, AM, Toth G. Tobacco point-of-purchase promotion: examining industry documents. *Tobacco Control*. 2006;15:377-84. Accessed December 6, 2007 from <http://tobaccocontrol.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/15/5/377?maxtoshow=&HITS=10&hits=10&RESULTFORMAT=1&andorexacttitle=and&andorexacttitleabs=and&andorexactfulltext=and&searchid=1&FIRSTINDEX=0&sortspec=relevance&volume=15&firstpage=377&resourcetype=HWCIT,HWELTR>
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- ⁶ Ontario Tobacco Research Unit. OTRU Update: Support for Tobacco Retail Display Bans in Ontario. March 2007. Accessed December 6, 2007 from: http://www.otru.org/pdf/updates/update_mar2007.pdf