

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

Vanessa Mercado

vmercado@countyofglenn.net

(530) 934 - 6588

New Survey Examines Glenn County's Accessibility and Marketing of Healthy and Unhealthy Products

Willows, CA – June 2020 – New research shows that in Glenn County the availability of Flavored Tobacco Products found near schools has increased from 63% in 2016 to 90% in 2019 among surveyed stores. These findings are part of new research released today on the availability and marketing of tobacco products, alcohol, condoms and healthy and unhealthy food options in California stores that sell tobacco.

The Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community (HSHC) Survey is the largest scientific survey of its kind in the state and builds upon previous research released in 2014 and 2017 to look at changes in the availability and marketing of the studied products over time. Information collected from nearly 8,000 randomly selected licensed tobacco retailers in all 58 California counties included convenience, gas, grocery, liquor and drug, as well as tobacco stores.

One of the key goals of the survey was to examine the accessibility and marketing of healthy and unhealthy products to youth. In Glenn County, 29% of surveyed stores still have tobacco marketing in kid-friendly locations, such as near candy or toys or under three feet.

“While we have made some progress in reducing the impacts of tobacco in our community, the findings from this survey show that our youth are still surrounded by unhealthy choices and messages in the retail environment,” said Carissa Kellogg, Health and Human Services Agency. “Tobacco advertising should not be somewhere that’s meant to be seen by our youth. Overall, we need a better balance of healthy choices in our stores, in order to prevent more community members from falling victim to the three leading causes of death in California—heart disease, cancer and stroke. These can largely be prevented by eliminating tobacco use, limiting alcohol use, eating healthy and being physically active.”

The survey found the following for Glenn County:

- 93.5% of stores surveyed sell flavored, non-cigarette tobacco products such as grape e-cigarettes, and this is an increase since 2016 when 84.8% sold them. All stores surveyed in Glenn County (100%) sold menthol cigarettes.
- The majority of stores sold little cigars/cigarillos (90.3%) or chewing tobacco (29%). These widely available products come in hundreds of enticing flavors, and can be sold individually – making them very appealing to youth.
- More stores in Glenn County sold flavored tobacco products such as e-cigarettes, little cigars and chew, than fresh fruits and vegetables (38.7%) when surveyed.
- More than 54.8% of surveyed stores in Glenn County sold sugary drinks at the checkout counter. California teens consume the equivalent of 39 pounds of sugar each year from sugary drinks.
- The vast majority of surveyed stores that sold alcohol (96.4%) sold alcopops. These are alcoholic beverages that come in sweet and fruity flavors that can be appealing to kids.

- 81% of stores surveyed sold condoms, but only 65% sold them on unlocked shelves where our community members can easily access them without having to ask a clerk for assistance. In California in 2018, bacterial STDs (chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis) significantly increased. Easier/Increased accessibility of condoms in our stores can help to reduce the spread of STDs in our community.

“The growing availability of flavored tobacco products are of particular concern as 80% of youth who have ever used tobacco started with a flavored product. To date, there are 15,500 different tobacco flavors, and this number keeps increasing. Flavors are the tobacco industry’s recruitment tool to hook new customers,” said Carissa Kellogg. “Glenn County is committed to continuing to work with local health advocates and partners to provide accurate information and help make the healthy choice the easy choice for Californians. We have an important opportunity, now, to make sure our stores offer healthier options.”

The Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community campaign is a statewide collaboration between tobacco and alcohol use prevention, sexually transmitted disease prevention, and nutrition partners to examine what’s in our community stores and how that impacts public health.

For full state and county-specific data and more information on Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community, please visit www.healthystoreshealthycommunity.com.

Glenn County Health and Human Services Agency, Glenn County Public Health

#