

# ASSESSING OREGON'S RETAIL ENVIRONMENT

SHINING LIGHT ON TOBACCO INDUSTRY TACTICS



To create a picture of what tobacco retail marketing looks like across the state, local health department staff, nonprofits, tribes and volunteers visited 2,000 Oregon tobacco retailers in 2018. Using a standard assessment tool, these visits provided comprehensive data on how the tobacco industry pushes its deadly products across Oregon.

The findings are clear: the tobacco industry targets people in Oregon, especially youth, communities of color and people living with lower incomes.

## Consider these facts:

The tobacco industry spends over \$100 million each year in Oregon<sup>1</sup>, putting its products front-and-center where people, including kids, will see them every day. This drumbeat of promotion is intentional. It is designed to manipulate consumers, spark nicotine cravings and generate impulse tobacco purchases among people trying to quit. These ads also lure teens and young adults to a deadly product.<sup>2</sup> The dominance of youth-targeted promotions begins on the exterior walls and windows of stores, with big, colorful ads that often are at the eye level of a young child. Tobacco retailers place attractive images of tobacco products alongside ads for snacks and treats that kids love, such as sodas, hot dogs and chips.

## IN OREGON:



**1 in 5** of tobacco retailers in the retail assessment placed tobacco products within a foot of candy or toys.



**3 in 4** Oregon high school students reported seeing tobacco ads in stores, online or in other media in 2017.<sup>3</sup>



Use of e-cigarettes among 11th graders increased nearly 3 fold from 2013 to 2017.<sup>3</sup>



**64%** of retailers offered discounts that make tobacco more affordable for youth and people with low incomes.



**1 in 2** retailers displayed outside advertising for at least one type of tobacco product.

The assessment sheds light on the variety and intensity of tobacco marketing targeted at youth. It also shows how the industry targets communities that already experience higher rates of tobacco use and tobacco-related chronic disease and death. To learn more about the retail assessment results and how counties, tribes, and community advocates are fighting back, read the full statewide report.

- To read the full statewide report, visit: [smokefreeoregon.com/retailassessment/](https://smokefreeoregon.com/retailassessment/)
- To stay in touch with tobacco news and prevention, follow Smokefree Oregon on Facebook.
- To get involved, visit: [smokefreeoregon.com/what-you-can-do/](https://smokefreeoregon.com/what-you-can-do/)

## WHAT IS THE TOBACCO PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAM (TPEP)?

The Oregon Health Authority Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP) works collaboratively with every Oregon county and tribe to implement community tobacco prevention and education programs. TPEP is grounded in best practices for tobacco control and seeks to make sustainable policy, systems and environmental change.

<sup>1,3</sup> For more information on data sources, please visit: [smokefreeoregon.com/sources/](https://smokefreeoregon.com/sources/)

# BENTON COUNTY TOBACCO RETAIL SNAPSHOT

## COUNTY TOBACCO RETAIL ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Across Oregon, teams visited nearly 2,000 grocery stores, convenience stores, gas stations, pharmacies and other retailers. All retailers in this survey allowed youth to shop in their stores.

## RETAIL FINDINGS ON TOBACCO MARKETING AND ADVERTISING IN BENTON COUNTY

In Benton County, TPEP and partners surveyed 41 retailers out of 44.



**4 in 9** advertised tobacco or e-cigarettes outside the store



**100%** sold flavored products (menthol, candy, etc.)



**13%** sold products within 12" of toys, candy, gum, slushy/soda or ice cream



**5 in 6** offered price promotions/discounts

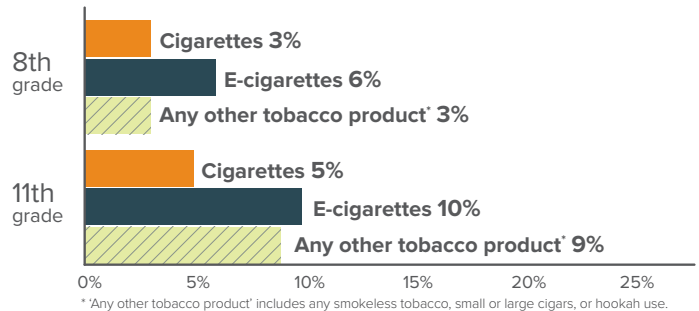


**54%** who sold cigarillos or small cigars advertised them for less than \$1

If you're interested in learning more about tobacco use in your county, you can explore your county's fact sheet at: [smokefreeoregon.com/what-you-can-do/](https://smokefreeoregon.com/what-you-can-do/)

<sup>13</sup> For more information on data sources, please visit: <https://smokefreeoregon.com/sources/>

## YOUTH TOBACCO USE<sup>3</sup>



Among 11th graders in the Valley region, e-cigarette use was higher than cigarette smoking in 2017.

Note: The Valley region includes Benton, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk and Yamhill Counties. Estimates are reported by region instead of county when one or more estimates from the county level represented too small a population to be reliable.

## FIGHTING BACK AGAINST TOBACCO INDUSTRY MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

- **Tobacco Retail Licensure** - Having a system that tracks tobacco retailers and enforces laws that keep kids from buying tobacco is critical to reducing tobacco use. Effective retail licensure has meaningful fees and penalties—and leaves an option for additional local policies.
- **Raising the Price of Tobacco Products** - Raising the price of tobacco is the most effective way to reduce tobacco consumption. Approaches include prohibiting discounts, multipack offers and coupons that keep tobacco cheap.
- **Regulating Flavored Tobacco Products** - Flavored tobacco is attractive to kids and masks the harsh taste and feel of tobacco products. Policies that restrict flavors would make tobacco products less appealing to youth.
- **Proximity and Density Policies** - Zoning restrictions can cap the number of retailers in an area, require a minimum distance between retailers or prohibit retail locations near schools or other areas youth frequent.
- **Tobacco-Free Pharmacies** - Prohibit the sale of tobacco products in pharmacies, where people go for medicine, flu shots and health care advice.