

RETAILER LICENSING SURVEY REPORT

Underage Smoking is a Problem

Ninety percent of adult smokers start smoking during adolescence. The earlier youth start to use tobacco, the more likely they are to become heavily addicted to nicotine. A 2005 survey revealed that 61,000 Los Angeles County youth aged 15 to 17 had smoked cigarettes during the previous 30 days.

Tobacco Companies Target Youth

Major tobacco companies continue to target young people with tactics including on-screen smoking in movies, placing ads in magazines read by young teens, and ads in convenience stores frequented by youth.

Current State Licensing Laws are Not Enough

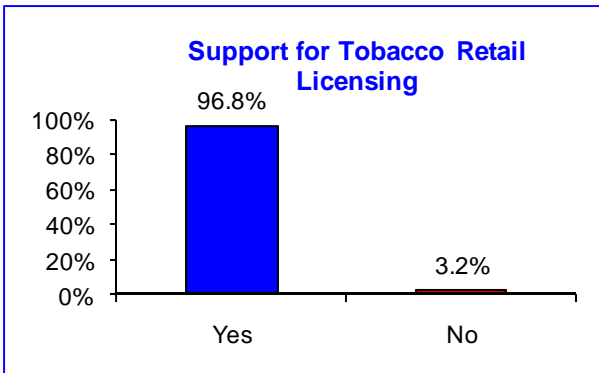
Although the 1994 California STAKE Act mandates compliance checks of tobacco retailers, the program is able to conduct compliance checks at only 3% of all California retailers each year. Furthermore, AB 71, which requires all tobacco retailers to be licensed with the state, requires only a one-time fee and provides no funding for the enforcement of youth access laws. The lack of comprehensive enforcement laws allow tobacco retailers to sell to minors without the threat of likely consequences.

Characteristics of the Survey

This report presents data collected in the city of Lakewood between July 2008 and August 2009.

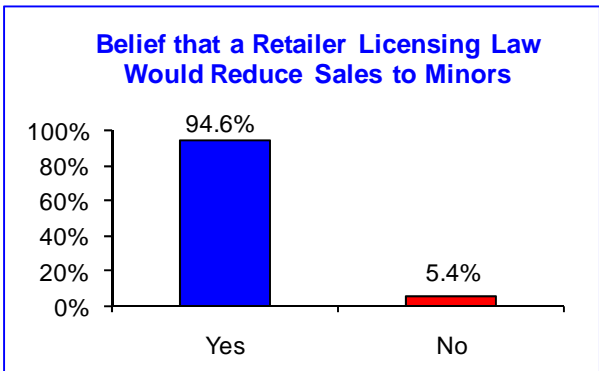
760 residents completed the survey, representing persons of varied sex, age groups, racial/ethnic groups, and tobacco use status. 43.1% of the respondents are current tobacco users and 56.9% are non-tobacco users.

Please keep in mind that this is not a scientific survey, hence findings may not be representative of all Lakewood residents.



Retailers Sell Illegally to Youth

A 2008 state investigation found that 1 in 8 stores approached sold tobacco to a minor. Also, about half of tobacco retailers posted the legally mandated state of California age-of-sale warning signs.



Support for Tobacco Retailer Licensing

- The majority of respondents believe that merchants should be required to have a license to sell tobacco. 97.8% of current tobacco users and 95.9% of non-tobacco users support a licensing requirement.
- 98.7% of respondents believe that retailers who continue to sell to youth should have their license revoked.
- 87.2% of respondents believe that it is easy for youth under 18 to buy cigarettes in the city of Lakewood.
- The majority of respondents believe that a tobacco retailer licensing law would reduce sales to minors. 96.6% of current tobacco users and 93.0% of non-tobacco users believe the law would reduce illegal sales.