

Minimum Packaging Policy in Nevada County

Final Evaluation Report 2014-2017



**Nevada County Department of Public Health
Tobacco Prevention Program**

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The Nevada County Tobacco Prevention Program would like to thank adult and youth coalition members for their continued support and work to improve the health and wellbeing of all Nevada County residents. Program staff would also like to recognize policy champions in the Nevada City Police Department and Nevada City city leadership: Tim Foley, Police Chief; Jennifer Ray, Mayor; and Mark Prestwich, City Manager.

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Aim and Outcome

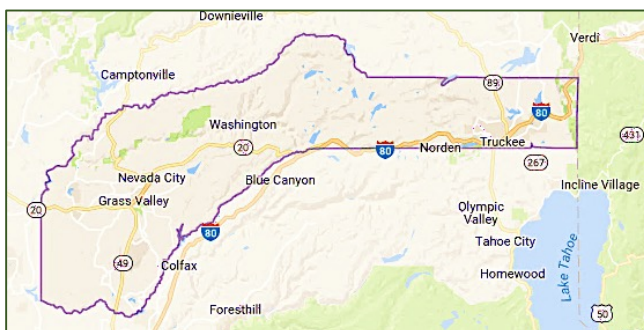
In order to limit youth access to flavored tobacco products, the Nevada County Tobacco Prevention Program set the following objective:

By June 30, 2017, at least one jurisdiction in Nevada County will amend their existing Tobacco Retail Licensing Ordinance to include a restriction on the sale of single cigarillos and little cigars.

By the end of project year 2 (June, 2016), the objective was fully met: one jurisdiction, Nevada City, adopted an amendment to their TRL policy on June 22, 2016. In addition to restricting the sale of cigarillos and little cigars to packs of five or more, the amendment also updated the existing tobacco definition to include electronic cigarettes and capped the number of issuable tobacco retail licenses to five, the current number of tobacco retailers in the city.

Background

Nevada County is a rural county, located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, with an estimated population of 98,570 (US Census Bureau, 2017). Approximately one-third of the population resides in three incorporated areas: Nevada City, Grass Valley and Truckee. Nevada City, the county seat, and Grass Valley sit side by side fifty-two miles east of Sacramento, while the city of Truckee is located on the eastern side of Donner Pass. The majority of the county's population is Caucasian (86%) followed by Hispanic/Latino (9%) (US Census Bureau, 2017).



According to the California Health Interview Survey (2016), 15.3% of Nevada County adults smoke, compared to the statewide rate of 12.7%. The proportion of Nevada County 9th and 11th graders, from traditional and non-traditional schools, who currently smoke cigarettes is 15.8%, while 16.4% currently use electronic cigarettes. (California Healthy Kids Survey, 2016). Limiting tobacco use among this population is a high priority for local tobacco prevention efforts.

Nevada County was the first rural California county to adopt a Tobacco Retail Licensing (TRL) ordinance, which requires tobacco retailers to obtain a permit to sell tobacco products. Permit fees are used to cover the cost of compliance checks and enforcement by local police departments. Retailers who are found selling tobacco to minors, under the TRL, can have their license suspended or revoked. A TRL was adopted in Nevada City in 2006; three years later, Grass Valley city officials passed a similar licensing requirement. Currently, there are 5 tobacco retailers in Nevada City and 15 in Grass Valley, which are subject to the TRL requirements. Youth coalition members played a key role in the passage of both TRLs, which were championed by local officials, who were concerned about high youth tobacco purchase rates and self-reported ease of access to tobacco products.

During the 2013 Healthy Stores for Healthy Community (HSHC) campaign, local tobacco retailers were once again in the spotlight as store observation surveys were conducted statewide and locally in all California counties. The Nevada County Tobacco Prevention Program (NCTPP), with the help of coalition and community members, surveyed 73 local tobacco retailers, collecting data on the availability, price and promotion of tobacco, alcohol and food products. Findings from the store surveys revealed that almost all retailers (92%) sold little cigars/cigarillos and 75% of stores sold these products as singles; both were higher than the statewide rates. Sixty percent of stores sold single cigarillos, Swisher Sweets brand, for less than one dollar each (Arrowsmith, 2013). These low priced products are available in a variety of fruit flavors, including strawberry and grape. According to the

Public Health Law and Policy Center (2012), individually sold or small package tobacco products appeal to youth because of their low price and in the case of little cigars/cigarillos, their appealing flavors.

Data from the store surveys were used to determine the priorities for the 2014/2017 NCTPP work plan. Twenty community members, including local school officials, leaders from other health organizations, youth/adult coalition members and program staff participated in the 2013 Communities of Excellence (CX) needs assessment process. During the CX meeting, out of the nine indicators assessed, minimum packaging and flavored tobacco product restrictions, which could both be used to limit access to little cigars/cigarillos, were rated very low. CX participants perceived lack of community awareness and support around the issue and there was no demonstrated support among local law makers for policies related to the issue.

Regardless of their low score, for a variety of reasons, CX participants felt that limiting access to flavored cigars/cigarillos through minimum packaging or flavor restrictions should be a priority for the 2014/2017 work plan. Youth involved in the CX process felt that it was an ideal focus area for the youth coalition because they are the target consumer for these products. Participants noted that, although a lot needs to be done to educate community members about the issue, local law makers have demonstrated, through the passage of TRL, support for local policies that reduce youth access to tobacco products. Ultimately it was decided that the objective would focus on minimum packaging because CX participants and NCTPP staff felt that law makers would be more likely to adopt this type of ordinance. A ban on all flavored tobacco products could be perceived, by law makers and community members, as extreme, placing too great a burden on local retailers and restricting personal freedoms, a concern frequently expressed in response to proposed regulations.

With existing TRLs in Nevada City and Grass Valley, access to flavored cigars could be limited by amending the existing licensing policies to include a minimum packaging restriction on these products. Program staff and coalition members who developed

the final objective decided to include both Nevada City and Grass Valley as optional targets for the intervention. They recognized that this would allow flexibility depending on the level of interest from community partners and policy maker in each jurisdiction. Although this was the primary objective, program staff felt that, considering the lack of awareness around the issue and the current political climate at the time of the CX process, it would be unrealistic to expect the policy to be adopted and implemented in the three year grant cycle. Staff also felt that by selecting to work on adoption only, more focus could be placed on process evaluation activities, which could inform future efforts around this indicator. Program staff and coalition members also noted that intervention efforts, specifically education activities targeting local law makers, should focus on reducing youth tobacco use and limiting youth access to tobacco products; based on past experiences with local policy work, this is the message that resonates most with this target audience.

Evaluation Methods and Design

The evaluation plan provided qualitative and quantitative data that informed intervention strategies and activities throughout the grant period. The intervention plan focused solely on the adoption of a legislated TRL amendment and therefore included only process evaluation activities.

Process data were collected from five evaluation activities. During project year 1 and year 2, NCTPP staff conducted Key Informant Interviews with local law enforcement and policymakers to measure current knowledge, attitudes and level of support regarding tobacco minimum packaging restrictions. Program staff also conducted a Public Opinion Poll in year 1 to determine the level of awareness around little cigars/cigarillos and support for a policy to limit the sale of these products. A second wave of Store Observation Surveys and a related data collection training to prepare data collectors occurred in project year 2. These evaluation activities, along with a Media Activity Record completed in year 3, were part of statewide data collection efforts in coordination

with the HSHC campaign. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including percentages and frequency counts; qualitative data were analyzed through content analysis to identify key themes and patterns.

Process evaluation activities, including Key Informant Interviews and Public Opinion Polls, provided information on public and policymaker opinions and awareness around little cigars/cigarillos and policies to limit access to these products. Store Observation Surveys provided local retail data on the availability, price and promotion of tobacco products, while the Media Activity Record documented the type of local media

coverage following the statewide HSHC press event and release of store survey data. Table 1 provides detailed information on the key process evaluation activities.

Limitations

The major limitations in the evaluation design are: 1) Public Opinion Poll results, based on a convenience sample, may not have accurately reflected the views of the wider community and; 2) Some products, advertising and price promotions may not have been seen by data collectors during store surveys, resulting in inaccurate observation data.

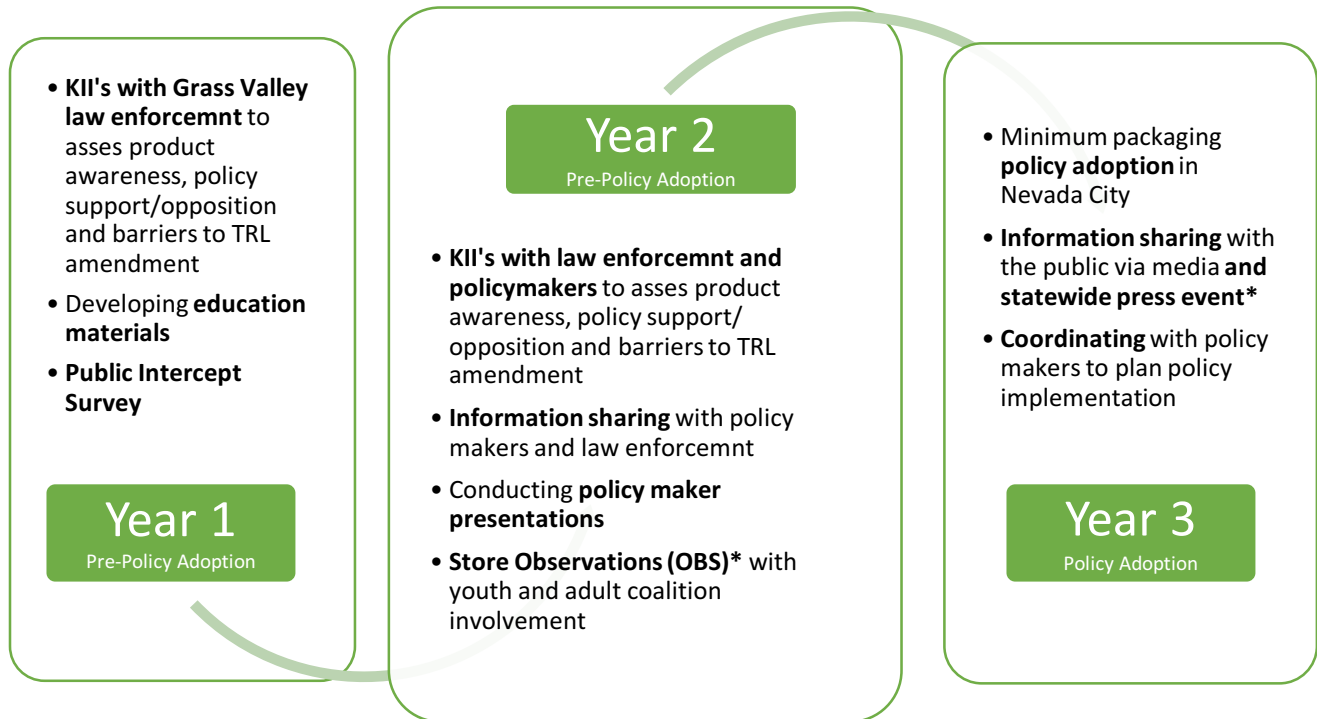
Table 1: Key Process Evaluation Activities

Evaluation Activity	Purpose	Sample	Instrument Source	Analysis Method	Timing/Waves
Process					
Key Informant Interviews with law enforcement and city council	Measure current knowledge, attitudes and level of support regarding tobacco minimum packaging restrictions.	Purposive sample of 5	Evaluation Consultant	Content analysis	Year 1 1 Wave Year 2 1 Wave
Public Opinion Poll	Measure the level of public awareness around little cigars/cigarillos and support for local minimum packaging policies.	Convenience sample of 155 community members	Evaluation Consultant	Qualitative analysis	Year 1 1 Wave Year 2 1 Wave
Statewide HSHC Store Observations	Measure the availability, price and marketing of various tobacco products.	Census of 67 retailers (optimal sample size)	Stanford University	Descriptive statistics	Year 2 1 Wave
Statewide HSHC Media Activity Record	Measure the level of support or opposition, as well as reach	Census of all 7 print, radio and online media outlets in the area	Tobacco Control Evaluation Center	Descriptive statistics and content analysis	Year 3 1 Wave

Implementation and Results

Early intervention and evaluation activities conducted throughout year 1 and in the beginning of year 2 determined the location, timing and strategies of future program efforts. Figure 1 provides an overview of the project timeline and includes key intervention and evaluation activities.

Figure 1: Key Intervention and Evaluation Activities in Chronological Order



*Evaluation activity that was part of a statewide data collection effort coordinated by the California Tobacco Control Program among all Local Lead Agencies in California.

Approaching Law Enforcement

In May 2015 of project year 1, NCTPP staff conducted Key Informant Interviews (KII) with 2 Grass Valley law enforcement officials to determine the level of awareness around flavored cigarillos/little cigars and support for a TRL amendment to limit the sale of these products. Program staff provided opportunities in the KII questionnaire for the interviewer to discuss relevant background data, keeping in mind that the interviewee may not be familiar with the existing TRL or retail data collection efforts. (Key Informant Interview questionnaire is attached in the Appendix.) At the time of the interviews, program staff had not decided whether the intervention would target Nevada City or Grass Valley. Key Informant Interview data results provided NCTPP with an initial understanding of the political climate and level of support for a minimum packaging policy. Local law enforcement was instrumental in the passage of the existing TRL policies, so knowing their position on the current issue was a priority for program staff, who felt that the amendment could only be adopted with local law enforcement support.

NCTPP had worked with the Grass Valley Police Department on a variety of tobacco prevention issues, including TRL and outdoor smoke-free policies, so Key Informant Interviews focused on this jurisdiction first. The police chief and detective interviewed were both involved in the enforcement of the TRL policy, expressed strong support for the existing TRL and other policies to limit youth access to tobacco, but felt that a minimum packaging amendment was unnecessary. The police chief was unaware of these products and surprised to learn of their availability at local retailers. He was unclear on the differences between little cigars/cigarillos and “regular” large cigars. Both believed that flavored cigarillos are appealing to youth, but did not think that youth in their community were using these products. They also felt that electronic cigarettes and vaping are a far greater concern than little cigars. The police detective said,

“I don’t see a big need for it at this time, especially if you are concerned about the youth use. I would say that electronic cigarettes are a greater concern.”

The police chief felt that the TRL, with its existing restrictions and requirements, effectively limits the sale of tobacco products to youth. According to him,

“...if these were merchants selling to minors then holding them to the existing TRL would be the most important thing rather than trying to ban a specific product...our TRL has had 100% compliance in last several years.”

Overall, the Grass Valley Police Department did not see a need for the minimum packaging amendment and felt that other products are a far greater concern. Shortly after the meeting with the Grass Valley Police Department, the project director conducted a Key Informant Interview with an officer from the Nevada City Police Department, hoping he would be interested in a more restrictive approach.

The officer was unaware of the existing TRL and was concerned that required compliance checks were not being conducted. He expressed support for an

amendment to restrict the sale of single cigarillos, which he felt are very appealing to youth because of their low price and kid-friendly flavors. When asked about potential barriers or challenges to adopting a minimum packaging policy, he replied,

“In Nevada City, not much! But some business owners want the least amount of restrictions and are only concerned with their profit margin being affected.”

Overall, both departments supported efforts to restrict youth access to tobacco products. However, Grass Valley expressed a lack of interest in a minimum packaging amendment because they did not see a need for this type of additional policy.

Approaching City Council

Although Grass Valley Police Department staff interviewed showed a lack of interest in a minimum packaging policy, program staff did not dismiss the city as a potential target for the intervention. When the objective was developed, it was anticipated that Grass Valley would be the target jurisdiction because of NCTPP’s strong relationship with law enforcement and their continued support for local tobacco legislation, including TRL and smoke-free policies. Thus, staff decided to conduct Key Informant Interviews with Grass Valley decision makers to measure their level of awareness around little cigars/ cigarillo and support for a minimum packaging policy. If city officials demonstrated support, NCTPP staff felt that the police chief would also join in support of the effort.

In August 2016, early in project year 2, staff interviewed two Grass Valley officials, the vice mayor and a city council member. Both expressed strong support for efforts that limit tobacco sales to youth and said that they would support a policy that restricts the sale of little cigars/cigarillos. Both thought that little cigars would be most appealing to youth and women because of the fruity flavors. When asked whether they were surprised about the availability of little cigars/cigarillos, they both said they were not and talked about the tobacco

companies doing whatever it takes to increase their profits and get around existing tobacco regulations. The councilwoman said,

“Does not surprise me, they [the tobacco companies] will find a market to fill any voids they are experiencing with other products, such as cigarettes. They are always going to look for the next thing to increase their sales.”

When asked about barriers or challenges to adopting a minimum packaging policy, they both talked about characteristics of some Nevada County residents, who are concerned about losing individual rights and freedoms. They also mentioned retailers, who may be concerned with profit loss and a perceived excess of government control. The vice mayor said,

“Freedom issues, I think there will be push back from people not wanting their ‘rights’ taken away...tobacco retailers, I don’t know what their profit margin is on these tobacco products, but I believe there will be push back from them for other reasons, such as too much government control.”

Overall, Key Informant Interview data from meetings with Grass Valley law makers, revealed a high level of support for local policies that limit access to tobacco products and indicated that NCTPP should be prepared to address concerns from community members and retailers, who may oppose a minimum packaging policy.

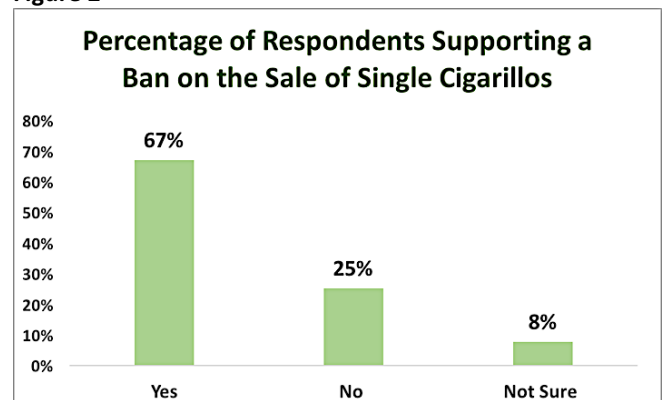
Based on Key Informant Interview results, program staff developed educational materials focusing on the characteristics of little cigars/cigarillos, specifically what sets them apart from a cigarette or large cigar, youth use rates of little cigars, tobacco marketing of flavored tobacco products and local policies and TRL “plug-ins” that can reduce access to little cigars/cigarillos. NCTPP wanted education materials to address the concerns and interests of the target audience, which included local law enforcement and decision makers who would either support or challenge the minimum packaging policy.

Public Intercept Survey

At the end of project year 1 and the beginning of project year 2, while Key Informant Interviews were being conducted with local law enforcement and decision makers, staff and youth coalition members also administered an electronic Public Intercept Survey to measure the level of public awareness around cigarillos and little cigars, use of these products and support for a policy that limits their sale. A convenience sample of 155 participants were surveyed from three Grass Valley locations, including a coffee shop storefront, grocery store and high-school health fair.

Public Intercept Survey results revealed that 40% of respondents had smoked a cigarillo, while 61% said that they had seen someone they know purchasing or smoke a cigarillo. When asked who they thought was most likely to use flavored cigarillos, 71% replied youth. The most noteworthy finding was that 67% of respondents said they would support a law banning the sale of single cigarillos. (Figure 2) Full survey results are attached in the Appendix.

Figure 2



Program staff was surprised by the level of public awareness and support for a minimum packaging policy. After close review of the data, program staff noted that any future public intercept surveys should focus on obtaining data specifically measuring youth use of flavored cigarillos. Public Intercept Survey data results were incorporated into educational materials and shared during future meetings and presentations with local law makers

Re-Approaching Law Enforcement

Data from Key Informant Interviews and Public Opinion Surveys showed support among Grass Valley residents and law makers for a policy to limit the sale of single cigarillos. Thus, NCTPP staff and coalition members decided to pursue the minimum packaging TRL amendment in Grass Valley. In September 2015, the project director spoke briefly with the Grass Valley police chief after a city council meeting, informing him of their decision and asking for his active support. In December 2015, NCTPP reached out multiple times to the chief, via email, to set up a meeting to discuss the next steps in the adoption process. When he finally responded in January, he informed the Project Director that he was retiring and would not be available to participate in the project. Without his support and not knowing the position of the next police chief, staff and coalition members decided to shift the focus of the intervention to Nevada City. However, NCTPP did not have experience working with the Nevada City police chief or city council members, so new relationships had to be established.

Program staff met first with the Nevada City police chief in February 2016; this meeting marked a turning point in the intervention. NCTPP provided him with educational materials, presented local retail data and discussed the characteristics of flavored cigarillos and local policy options to address the issue. He was very receptive to the issue and expressed strong support for a minimum packaging amendment and advised program staff to contact a Nevada City council member who was supportive of public health issues, specifically those involving youth. Following the meeting with the Nevada City police chief, staff and coalition members felt very positive about the prospect of adopting a policy in Nevada City.

Approaching Nevada City Law-Makers

In early March, 2016, the project director conducted an educational phone meeting with the Nevada City city council member, following the recommendation of the police chief. She also

expressed strong support for a minimum packaging policy to restrict access to single cigarillos. She referred the project director to the Nevada City mayor, whom program staff contacted and met with the following week. She was also very supportive of the amendment and said that she would champion any efforts to limit tobacco use. The mayor said that she preferred a complete ban on all tobacco products. However, after investigating the legality of a tobacco ban, NCTPP decided to adhere to the original objective while asking for additional amendments to TRL: updating the tobacco definition to include electronic cigarettes and capping the number of issuable licenses.

The project director communicated frequently with the mayor during the month of March, strategizing for the first city council presentation. The mayor also invited the city manager to join the campaign. He was also very supportive of the policy and became highly active in the project, communicating frequently with the project director and city manager about the proposed amendments and upcoming city council presentation. His support proved to be instrumental in the passage of the policy because he was able to assign the development of the city council report and official TRL amendments to his staff. These documents, which were distributed to council members prior to NCTPP presentations and related meetings, provided the background for the policy and prepared city council members to vote on the proposed legislation.

The mayor and city manager helped the project director prepare for city council presentations by providing guidance and feedback on presentation materials and preparing her for potential questions and opposition from city council members.

Presenting to City Council

NCTPP staff, along with youth and adult coalition members, conducted 1 formal presentation for the Nevada City City Council and also attended 3 council meetings before the minimum packaging policy and

additional TRL amendments were approved. City council members, recruited to champion the policy, voiced support for the amendments during the meetings; the police chief also demonstrated his support for the policy by being present during council meetings.

During the presentation in April 2016, Youth Coalition members conducted a power point presentation, discussing emerging tobacco products, including little cigars/cigarillos, local retail data showing price and availability of these products and the issues associated with these products, specifically their appeal to youth. Following the presentation, Youth Coalition members asked the council to adopt a minimum packaging policy restricting the sale of cigarillos to packages of five or more, updating the existing tobacco definition and capping the number of issuable Tobacco Retail Licenses. The City Council was very receptive to the youth and said that they were impressed with the quality of the presentation. As a result, they made a motion to move forward with the adoption of the proposed TRL amendments.

During the second council meeting, attended by program staff in April, community and coalition members voiced support for the proposed TRL amendments. During this meeting, council members were given a copy of the exiting TRL and the staff report, developed by the city planner, detailing the proposed amendments to the TRL, background data and asking council members to provide guidance on making these changes. In response, city council members asked that the amendments be drafted and presented at a future meeting. The city manager volunteered his staff to develop the document and the initial reading of the amendments was scheduled for June, 2016.

The first reading of the amendments to the TRL occurred during the third city council meeting. Under the guidance of the NCTPP project director, modification to the policy were made in response to a letter from the American Petroleum and Convenience Store Association. The modifications, which affected the original TRL provisions, included

allowing retention of the TRL during periods of temporary closure, transfer of the license during sale of business and deletion of a provision requiring employees selling tobacco products to be at least 21. The City Council decided to include the requested modification and asked city staff to draft them into the amended TRL policy.

The revised TRL amendments were read on July 6, 2013 and council members voted unanimously in favor of the policy. The adopted policy included a minimum packaging restriction, limiting the sale of cigarillos to pack of five or more, updated the existing tobacco definition to include electronic vaping devices and capped the number of issuable tobacco retail licenses to the current number of tobacco retailers in Nevada City. At the time of the ordinance's passage, there was conversation among city staff and city council members about the current number of tobacco retailers within the city limits. Although the first number presented in the draft ordinance was five, it was later counted to be seven, with an additional retailer in process for a second license, bringing the total in June 2016 to eight. Since that time, one retailer has closed, bringing the current number to seven.

With the passage of the TRL amendments, Nevada City became the first rural California jurisdiction to pass a minimum packaging policy. Reflecting on this success, program staff and coalition members noted that once they presented to the City Council, the members were quick to move forward with the policy. They were very receptive to the Youth Coalition and the decision to adopt the TRL amendments seemed to be a natural next step in addressing the local issues highlighted during the presentation. Nevada City was also the first rural jurisdiction to adopt a TRL and recently passed a policy prohibiting smoking in their downtown historic district.

Passage of the TRL amendments was shared with coalition members and community nutrition and alcohol partners during meetings and email announcements. One local print article, highlighting the proposed changes to the TRL, was published after the first council meeting.

Store Observation Surveys

After the initial city council presentation, NCTPP shifted its focus to the Store Observation Surveys, which were conducted in coordination with the HSHC statewide campaign. Program staff and youth/adult coalition members conducted a census survey of 68 tobacco retailers located throughout Nevada County. Prior to conducting the store observations, 8 participants attended a half-day training to become familiar with the survey questions, products being documented and operation of the handheld device. Training materials were provided by the California Tobacco Control Program (CTCP) as part of statewide data collection efforts. A post-training knowledge questionnaire, also developed by CTCP and formatted by NCTPP into Survey Monkey, was emailed to all participants to assess their ability to accurately answer observation survey questions.

Using handheld electronic devices, data collectors documented the availability, placement, price and promotion of tobacco, alcohol and food products. As with the 2013 store observation surveys, NCTPP selected the optimal sample size to allow for comparison with previous retail data and provide the most accurate representation of the local retail environment. Once Store Observation Surveys concluded, the CTCP cleaned and analyzed the survey data and provided the project director with the results, which were shared during meetings and presentation with coalition members, as well as county and community nutrition and alcohol partners.

Survey results showed that almost all Nevada County tobacco retailers sell menthol cigarettes and cigarillos. The number of stores selling both products increased slightly between 2013 and 2016, while the proportion of stores selling single cigarillos remained at 75%. Conversely, the availability of flavored products and chewing tobacco decreased slightly between 2013 and 2016. The most noteworthy finding was the increase in availability of electronic cigarettes, from 49% of

retailers in 2013 to 72% in 2016, a 22% increase in just 3 years (Arrowsmith, 2016). (Figure 3, page 11)

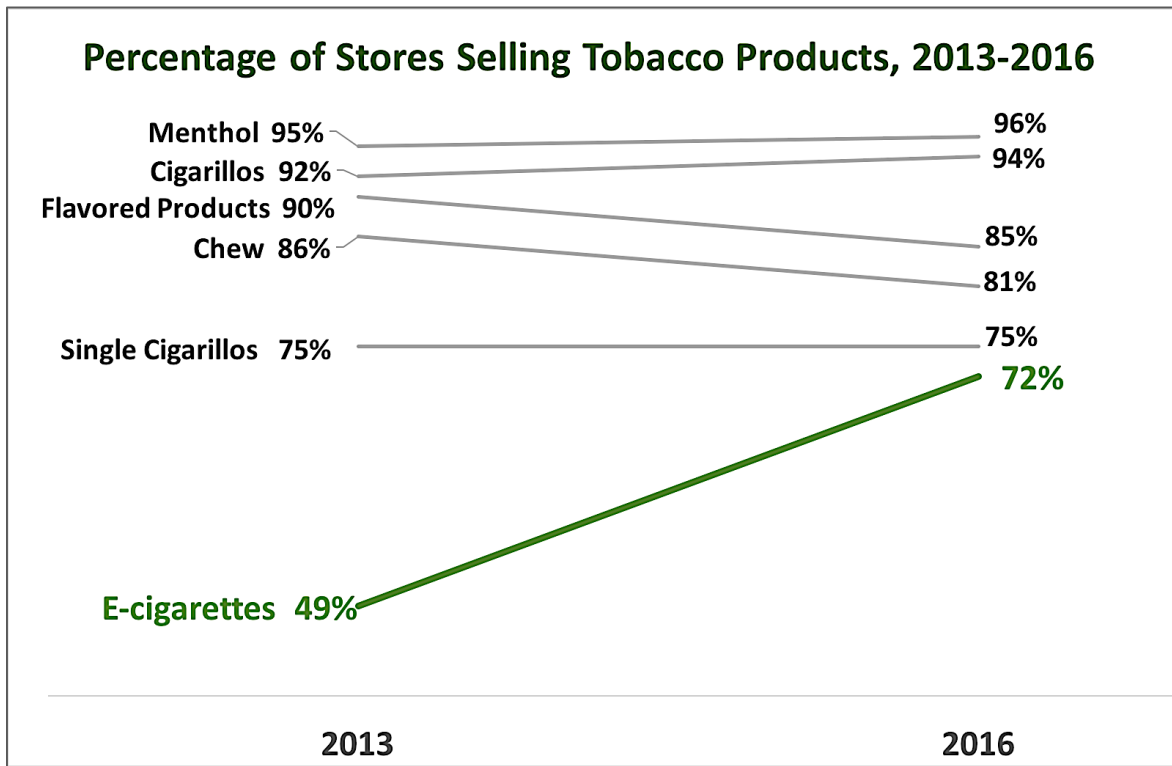
The most noteworthy finding was the increase in availability of electronic cigarettes, from 49% of retailers in 2013 to 72% in 2016, a 22% increase in just 3 years.

This trend indicates an increase in demand for electronic devices among Nevada County residents and a need for NCTPP and community efforts to limit the use and sale of these products. (Fact sheet with key findings is attached in the Appendix.) In response to the HSHC data, the Nevada County Health Officer said,

“The expanded availability of e-cigarettes is of particular concern and reflects the spike in use by teens and young adults in the last three years.”

Program staff and coalition members used store survey results to develop the 2017-2020 NCTPP work plan. In response to the increasing number of tobacco retailers selling cigarillos and electronic cigarettes, the plan will contain an objective to amend Grass Valley’s TRL to include a minimum packaging restriction on cigarillos and update the tobacco definition to include electronic cigarettes. Store observation results were posted to the NCTPP webpage and will be included in future fact sheets and education materials.

Figure 3



Media and the Statewide Press Event

Overall, media efforts were successful in generating positive coverage about the retail campaign and local store survey results. Program staff submitted a press packet, including a press release and fact sheet, to 4 local media outlets (1 online, 2 print and 1 radio) in May 2016. Staff also participated in the coordinated regional press event to release findings from the HSHC store observation surveys. One of the 4 media outlets, Yuba Net-an online news site-picked up the story and published the press release developed by NCTPP. The article cited key findings from the store observation surveys including the increase in stores selling electronic cigarettes, percentage of stores selling flavored tobacco products, percentage of stores with outdoor advertising of unhealthy products and percentage of tobacco retailers with tobacco advertising in kid-friendly locations. As a result of this coverage, a

potential audience of more than 15,500 may have been reached with this news. (Press release and fact sheet in appendix.)

Implementation Planning

In the remaining months of the final project year, program staff worked with the Nevada City city manager to begin planning the implementation of the amended TRL policy. The project director decided that communication with retailers about the new requirements would be done once city staff officially added the amendments to the TRL policy. The city manager said that new legislation is added to the municipal code on a yearly basis; NCTPP is still waiting for this to be completed. In the next funding cycle, the project director will coordinate with local law enforcement and city staff to ensure effective implementation of the policy.

Conclusions and Recommendation

The NCTPP achieved its goal of passing a minimum packaging policy; Nevada City amended its existing TRL to restrict the sale of cigarillos and little cigars to packs of five or more. The amendment also updated the existing tobacco definition to include electronic cigarettes and capped the number of issuable Tobacco Retail Licenses to 5, the current number of tobacco retailers in the city. Initial efforts focused on Grass Valley because program staff had an established relationship with the police chief, who was a strong advocate for the TRL. When the Grass Valley chief suddenly announced his retirement, NCTPP shifted its focus to Nevada City and was able to quickly build political will to pass the policy.

Several key factors helped build political will among Nevada City city council members: allies in the City Council, among city staff and the police department, Youth Coalition members who delivered a high-quality presentation to the City Council and asked for the minimum packaging policy, and the presence of local retail data demonstrating evidence of the availability of flavored tobacco products and cigarillos. Public Intercept Survey data and other activities aimed at building and demonstrating community support were not essential to the passage of the policy. Council members supported the policy prior to hearing public comments and without seeing local public intercept data. Key Informant interviews and education meetings were important stepping stones in the project's progression, as they enabled staff to gauge the level of law enforcement and leadership support in both jurisdictions and identify champions for the Nevada City policy.

Timing also played a key role in the passage of the policy. The local political climate can change drastically as new members join the City Council or existing members leave. Thus, it is important to be aware of when and what changes might occur during the course of the project. NCTPP was fortunate that at the time of the intervention, the City Council was made up of members who were very receptive to the issue and passed the policy without any internal resistance. In a county that is somewhat politically divided, this ideal situation is not guaranteed, as the views of the city council can change significantly from one election cycle to the next.

Involving Youth Coalition members in the city council presentation was one of the most important factors contributing to the adoption of the policy. Youth Coalition members were uniquely positioned to speak on the issue of flavored cigarillos as they are among the age group targeted most by these products. Council members responded positively to the youth, saying how impressed they were with the presentation and agreeing to move forward with the legislation that they requested. Future efforts will focus more on involving local retailers, who could have voiced support for the existing TRL and prevented the modifications requested by the American Petroleum and Convenience Store Association.

Over the next year, NCTPP will collaborate with law enforcement to implement the new policy. Program staff and coalition members will develop and distribute educational materials to Nevada City tobacco retailers, informing them of the minimum packaging restriction and how to comply with the new rules. Staff will also work with the Nevada City Police Department to ensure that TRL compliance checks are being completed. During the next grant cycle, NCTPP will focus on adopting a similar TRL amendment in Grass Valley. Program staff work closely with Youth Coalition members to build support among decision makers and educate them on how minimum packaging policies can improve community health by reducing youth access to harmful tobacco products.

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