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1-E-8

Endgame Retail Observations

Summary Report

KINGS COUNTY TOBACCO CONTROL PROGRAM



July 2024

**Objective 1**: *By June 30, 2025, at least one (1) jurisdiction in Kings County (e.g. Avenal, Lemoore) will adopt and implement a comprehensive tobacco retail licensing policy that requires tobacco retailers to obtain a license to sell tobacco products, includes elimination of flavored and menthol tobacco sales, designates a minimum retail sale price for tobacco products set in conjunction with minimum package/volume size, includes restrictions on the redemption of coupons or other discounts on tobacco products, imposes at least 1500 feet minimum distancing requirements between retailers, requires 1000 feet sales restrictions from youth-sensitive areas, and designates a portion of the annual licensing fee ensure adequate enforcement of the policy. The policy will prohibit police harassment of persons who purchase, use or possess tobacco, and exclude any provision that criminalizes a person for the purchase, use, or possession of tobacco products.*

Introduction

As part of the statewide End Commercial Tobacco Campaign, the King County Tobacco Control Program (KCTCP) conducted retail observations in the City of Avenal. All retailers were licensed at the time of the observation, although not all were currently in with the dataset being provided by the state tobacco control program. Data collectors were able to conduct retail observations at all fourteen sites for Avenal. This collection cycle is the second wave of retail observations for the City of Avenal.

Methodology

Observation were conducted using an online instrument designed by the Tobacco Control Evaulation Center (TCEC). All data was collected on April 23 and May 17, 2024. Program staff participated in a TCEC-sponsored training and subsequently trainined their data collection volunteers.

Outcomes

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Avenal Retailers  N=14 | |
| Liquor store | 1 |
| Convenience store with gas | 4 |
| Convenience store without gas | 2 |
| Small market/deli/produce market | 2 |
| Supermarket/large grocery store | 1 |
| Discount store/supercenter | 3 |
| Other | 1 |

Results from the retail observations are briefly summarized below. The full results for all items included in the observations instrument can be found in the appendix.

The city of Avenal only had 14 licensed retailers: one liquor store, four convenience stores with gas, two convenience stores without gas, two small markets/deli/produce markets, one supermarket/large grocery store, three discount stores/supercenters, and one tobacco store/head shop. Observations for all 14 locations were completed.

*\*More than one option could be selected*

Observers were asked to examine the outside of the retail location prior to entering. They noted the products that were being advertised. Six (43%) of the locations advertised non-vaping tobacco products (e.g. cigarettes, cigar products, chew), two (14%) locations advertised vaping products, five (36%) had alcoholic beverages, nine (64%) had sugar-sweetened beverages, one (7%) had healthy beverages, five (36%) advertised unhealthy snacks, three (21%) had produce, two (14%) had prepared hot foods, and one (7%) location had none of the above. Additionally, advertisements for mobile coupons were observed at one (7%) location and flavored tobacco products were observed at (7%) another location.

The majority of retailers observed, 13 out of the 14, sold tobacco products including non-menthol cigarettes, littles cigars/cigarillos/cigar wrap, smokeless tobacco, and menthol cigarettes. Two (14%) locations sold vaping products, the most common being disposables.

Among the retailers that sold tobacco products the most common flavors of non-cigarette products were fusion (solar, jazz, green, or royal haze flavors) and other concept flavors (not referring to actual food, beverages, or herbs). Tobacco products were mainly observed by the main checkout area, behind or near the register, and one location had tobacco products also shelved in a separate but visible area.

*\*More than one option could be selected*

Among the stores that sold little cigars/cigarillos, the cheapest pack was being sold for less than $1. The price of a single pack of cigarettes ranged from $1.50 to $9.99; it is not clear whether this was due to a data entry error as since $1.50 is well bellow what is expected for a pack of cigarettes.

Summary and Recommendations

The most common tobacco product sold in Avenal stores was non-menthol cigarettes, this was different from the first wave, where the most common tobacco product observed in 2022 were menthol cigarettes. During this collection cycle the most common type of advertisement in the exterior of Avenal stores included sugar-sweetened beverages (64%) as well as any other tobacco product (43%). In the first wave tobacco advertisements were not common in the exterior of the store but rather the interior. Additionally, the second wave results suggested majority of stores did not have any type of tobacco-industry marketing inside (57%) and for those that did have tobacco-industry marketing the most frequently observed was branded shelving units (36%).

During the first and second wave the price for a pack of little cigars/cigarillos varied, but the majority of stores sold them for $1.00-1.99 however the cheapest price for cigars/cigarillos was less than $1.00.

Although current state law restricts the sale of flavored products, they are still available in the city of Avenal. The most common flavors of any type of tobacco product found by observers in the city of Avenal were fusion/solar/jazz/green/royal haze and other concept flavors. During the first wave of observations flavor tobacco products were not restricted, therefore easily accessible in stores and the most common type observed in 2022 were mint/menthol and fruit/sweet/liquor. Affordability of tobacco products, flavors, and accessibility continue to contribute to the increased use among underage youth in the city of Avenal. It is recommended that these results be incorporated into campaign talking points and used to facilitate policies that address tobacco-related concerns for the city and its residents.

Appendix

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Survey Completion**  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Survey was completed | 14 | 100.0 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Age Restrictions**  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Under 21 not allowed | 1 | 7.1 |
| No age restriction | 13 | 92.9 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Store Type**  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Convenience store WITH gas | 4 | 28.6 |
| Convenience store WITHOUT gas | 2 | 13.6 |
| Discount store/super center | 3 | 21.4 |
| Liquor store | 1 | 7.1 |
| Small market/deli/produce market | 2 | 14.3 |
| Supermarket/large grocery store | 1 | 7.1 |
| Other | 1 | 7.1 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Advertisements on Windows and Clear Doors or Elsewhere OUTSIDE the Store\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Vaping products | 2 | 14.3 |
| Any other tobacco products (e.g., cigarettes, cigar products, chew) | 6 | 42.9 |
| Alcoholic beverages | 5 | 35.7 |
| Healthy beverages | 1 | 7.1 |
| Sugar-sweetened beverages | 9 | 64.3 |
| Unhealthy snacks | 5 | 35.7 |
| Produce | 3 | 21.4 |
| Prepared hot foods | 2 | 14.3 |
| None of the above | 1 | 7.1 |
| **Does the ad for vaping or other tobacco products include a flavored tobacco product?** | **#** | **%** |
| Yes | 1 | 16.6 |
| No | 5 | 83.3 |
| Did not have an ad for vaping or other products OUTSIDE the store | 8 | 57.1 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Advertisements for Mobile Coupons OUTSIDE the Store**  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Yes | 1 | 7.1 |
| No | 13 | 92.9 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Price Promotions OUTSIDE the Store\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Vaping products | 0 | 0 |
| Non-menthol cigarettes | 0 | 0 |
| Menthol cigarettes | 0 | 0 |
| Regular cigarettes | 2 | 14.3 |
| Little cigars/cigarillos/cigar wraps | 0 | 0 |
| Large cigars | 0 | 0 |
| Smokeless tobacco | 1 | 7.1 |
| Hookah/Shisha | 0 | 0 |
| None of the above | 11 | 78.6 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Food Items Available\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Healthy beverages | 12 | 85.7 |
| Alcoholic beverages | 11 | 78.6 |
| Sugar-sweetened beverages | 12 | 85.7 |
| Produce | 7 | 50 |
| Prepared perishable foods | 6 | 42.9 |
| Unhealthy packaged snacks | 12 | 85.7 |
| Ice cream | 12 | 85.7 |
| None of the above | 2 | 14.3 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Other Non-Tobacco Products Available\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Clothing | 11 | 78.6 |
| Electronics | 12 | 85.7 |
| Toiletries | 13 | 92.9 |
| Over the counter medication | 14 | 100 |
| Automotive supplies | 10 | 71.4 |
| Gifts or jewelry | 11 | 78.6 |
| Guns | 0 | 0.0 |
| Lottery tickets or scratchers | 9 | 64.3 |
| None of the above | 0 | 0.0 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Other Tobacco-Related Products Available\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Cannabidiol (CBD) for vaping | 0 | 0.0 |
| CBD cigarettes | 0 | 0.0 |
| Other CBD products | 0 | 0.0 |
| “Tobacco-free” nicotine products | 1 | 7.1 |
| Approved cessation products | 0 | 0.0 |
| Rolling papers or herbal wraps | 5 | 35.7 |
| Glassware | 1 | 7.1 |
| None of the above | 8 | 57.1 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Pharmacy Counter**  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Yes | 0 | 0.0 |
| No | 14 | 100.0 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Signs for the Following**  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Cessation information | 1 | 7.1 |
| Alternative sources to buy tobacco | 0 | 0.0 |
| None of the above | 13 | 92.9 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Tobacco-Industry Marketing INSIDE the Store\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Branded shelving units | 5 | 35.7 |
| Price promotions | 2 | 14.3 |
| Advertisement for mobile coupons | 0 | 0.0 |
| Other advertisements | 2 | 14.3 |
| None | 8 | 57.1 |
| **Does the tobacco-industry marketing inside the store include a flavored tobacco product?\*\*** | **#**  **n=6\*\*** | **%** |
| Yes | 2 | 33.3 |
| No | 4 | 66.7 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*   
*\*\*Only recorded for retailers that had industry branding*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Price Promotions INSIDE the Store\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 2\*\*)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Vaping products | 1 | 50.0 |
| Menthol cigarettes | 1 | 50.0 |
| Non-menthol cigarettes | 1 | 50.0 |
| Regular cigarettes | 2 | 100.0 |
| Hookah/shisha | 0 | 0.0 |
| Little cigars/cigarillos/cigar wraps | 0 | 0.0 |
| Premium/large cigars | 0 | 0.0 |
| Smokeless tobacco | 1 | 50.0 |
| None of the above | 0 | 0.0 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*

*\*\*Only recorded for retailers that had price promotions*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Where Tobacco Products are Shelved\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 14)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Main checkout area, behind or near the register | 13 | 92.9 |
| Somewhere else visible to customers | 1 | 7.1 |
| Shelved where customers can’t see them | 0 | 0.0 |
| None of the above | 1 | 7.1 |

*\*More than one option could be selected* 

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Tobacco Products Available\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 13\*\*\*)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Vaping products | 2 | 15.4 |
| Any other tobacco products | 13 | 100.0 |
| None of the above | 0 | 0.0 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*

*\*\*\*For one retail location, no response was recorded for this question* 

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Types of Vaping Products Available\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 2\*\*)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Disposables | 2 | 100.0 |
| Other vaping products | 1 | 50.0 |
| E-liquids | 1 | 50.0 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*

\*\**Only recorded for retailers that had carry vaping products*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Other Types of Tobacco Products Available\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 13\*\*)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Menthol cigarettes | 3 | 23.1 |
| Non-menthol cigarettes | 8 | 61.5 |
| Regular cigarettes | 13 | 100.0 |
| Little cigars/cigarillos/cigar wraps | 7 | 53.8 |
| Premium/large cigars | 2 | 15.4 |
| Smokeless tobacco | 3 | 23.1 |
| Hookah/shisha | 1 | 7.7 |
| Loose-leaf | 2 | 15.4 |
| “Tobacco-free” nicotine products | 2 | 15.4 |
| None of the above | 0 | 0.0 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*   
*\*\* Only recorded for retailers that had other types of tobacco-products*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Little Cigars/Cigarillos**  **Avenal**  **(n = 7\*)** | | |
| **Size of the smallest pack** | **#** | **%** |
| Singles | 4 | 57.1 |
| 2-4 | 3 | 42.9 |
| **Cheapest pack** | **#** | **%** |
| Less than $1 | 2 | 28.6 |
| $1-1.99 | 5 | 71.4 |

*\* Only recorded for retailers that had little cigars/cigarillos*

*\*\*Seven locations did not carry little cigars/cigarillos*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Flavors of Non-Cigarette Tobacco Products Available\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 13\*\*)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Chill/ice/cool | 1 | 7.7 |
| Menthol/mint | 0 | 0.0 |
| Fruit/sweet/liquor | 2 | 15.4 |
| Fusion/solar/jazz/green/royal haze | 3 | 23.1 |
| Another concept flavor | 3 | 23.1 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*   
*\*\*This table only reflects those that were identified to carry tobacco products*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Products Available in Explicit Flavors\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 13\*\*)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Hookah/shisha | 1 | 7.7 |
| Single cigars over $12 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Loose-leaf tobacco | 0 | 0.0 |
| Other (e.g., vaping products, LCCs, chew, etc.) | 2 | 15.4 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*   
*\*\*This table only reflects those that were identified to carry tobacco products*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Products Available in Fusion/Solar/Jazz or Other Concept Flavors\***  **Avenal**  **(n = 13\*\*)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Hookah/shisha | 0 | 0.0 |
| Single cigars over $12 | 0 | 0.0 |
| Loose-leaf tobacco | 0 | 0.0 |
| Other (e.g., vaping products, LCCs, chew, etc.) | 3 | 23.1 |

*\*More than one option could be selected*   
*\*\*This table only reflects those that were identified to carry tobacco products*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **How Cheapest Pack of Cigarettes was Identified**  **Avenal**  **(n = 13\*)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| Clerk provided price | 11 | 84.6 |
| I had to look for lowest advertised price | 2 | 15.4 |
| Unable to determine | 0 | 0.0 |

*\*This table only reflects those that were identified to carry non-vaping tobacco products*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Cheapest Pack of Cigarettes**  **Avenal**  **(n = 13\*)** | | |
|  | **#** | **%** |
| $1.50 – 2.50 | 2 | 15.4 |
| $3.50 – 4.50 | 3 | 23.1 |
| $5.50 – 6.50 | 3 | 23.1 |
| $6.99 - $9.99 | 5 | 38.5 |

*\*This table only reflects those that were identified to carry non-vaping tobacco products*