

Oregon Tobacco Inspections Report

December 2022



Program Description

Oregon law prohibits the sale of tobacco products and inhalant delivery systems to persons under 21 years of age. The Oregon Public Health Division conducts random, unannounced inspections of retailers that sell tobacco products and inhalant delivery systems, such as e-cigarettes, to ensure compliance with state law.

As of January 1, 2022, any business that wants to sell tobacco and inhalant delivery system products in Oregon is required to get a tobacco retail license from the Department of Revenue. Tobacco license systems support retailer accountability by imposing effective penalties, including the suspension of tobacco licenses for retailers who repeatedly violate the law. If an employee or owner of the tobacco retailer makes an illegal sale during an inspection the Oregon Health Authority issues a civil penalty to the licensed owner.

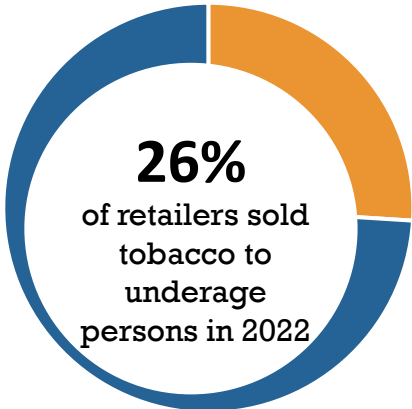
In 2022, the new Oregon Tobacco Retail License program conducted 500 minimum legal sales age inspections.

Violations varied by product type. E-cigarettes were sold more often to underage persons than cigarettes and little cigars.



Youth marketing

Research shows that if people do not start smoking before they turn 19, they are far less likely to ever start. This makes young people key targets of the tobacco industry. The tobacco industry surrounds people with marketing and promotes products with flavors that appeal to youth. While youth use of cigarettes has been decreasing over time, use of other tobacco and nicotine products, such as e-cigarettes and small cigars, are still a concern.



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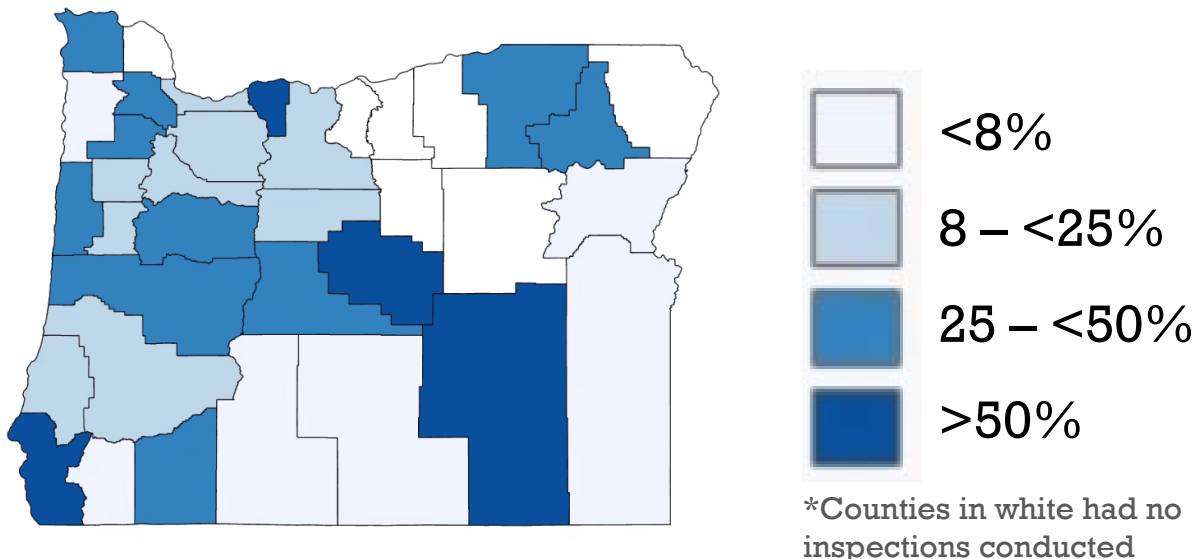
The retail environment

Commercial tobacco companies spend over \$100 million per year to market their products in Oregon, much of it in the retail environment. Tobacco products are cheap, readily available and easy to get, and are heavily promoted and marketed in stores where youth frequent. Higher exposure to tobacco marketing in the retail space is associated with increased youth initiation and ongoing use of tobacco.

Violation rates were highest in grocery stores and markets followed by vape shops and tobacco stores where flavored products that appeal to youth are sold.

Convenience Stores	23%
Grocery/Market	37%
Pharmacy	0%
Tobacco/Vape Shops	27%

Violation rates in Oregon vary by county.



Tobacco enforcement and commercial tobacco prevention

Studies show implementation of strong commercial tobacco prevention policies along with active tobacco enforcement, effective retailer education, and leadership support are essential to success in reducing youth tobacco use. Specifically, retail licensure creates a straightforward method for tracking and holding businesses that sell tobacco products and inhalant delivery systems accountable.

For more information contact:
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www.healthoregon.org/tobaccoretailsales