

Our Vision

The Northeast Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) is invested in reducing preventable chronic disease. Our work reduces commercial tobacco use among youth and adults. Limiting access to commercial tobacco is a big part of making that happen.



Tobacco Prevention Strategies Work

Minnesota's investment in comprehensive tobacco prevention and treatment...

- Reduced smoking, prevented serious tobacco-caused disease, and saved billions of dollars in health care costs.
- **Saved an estimated \$5.1 billion as a result of long-term investment (1998-2017), avoiding \$2.4 billion in productivity losses and \$2.7 billion in medical care.**
- Prevented over 4,500 cancer cases; 44,000 hospitalizations for cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease and diabetes; and 4,100 smoking-attributable deaths.*

**According to a study in the journal Tobacco Control, Maciosek MV, LaFrance AB, St Claire A, Xu Z, Brown M, Schillo BA. Twenty-year health and economic impact of reducing cigarette use: Minnesota 1998-2017. Tobacco control. 2020 Sep 1;29(5):564-9.*

“In recent years, we have seen the increase in vaping among students – it’s becoming an everyday thing and it concerns us.”

“If you start, you won’t be able to stop and you’ll be addicted.”

- Cloquet Middle School Students



Community Drives Solutions

A critical part of preventing commercial tobacco use is community-centered relationships.

Recently, we heard the voices of concerned Cloquet students in response to an anti-vaping campaign.

The Problem

Commercial tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States. Not everyone has an equal opportunity to be free from addiction, including adults living below the poverty level, those who identify as black or indigenous, and adults with mental health or substance use disorder.

Adults in Northeast MN

- Our region experiences some of the highest commercial tobacco use rates in the state.
- According to the Bridge to Health survey, 15.8% of adults in Carlton, Cook, Lake, St Louis counties report every day smoking.

Youth Nicotine Dependence

- Nicotine dependence is intensifying among youth who vape (2023 MN Youth Tobacco Survey).
- Industry targeting, including flavors, lures teens to vaping. Nicotine traps them in a cycle of dependence, making it difficult to quit.
- In 2023, 93.3% of students who vape used a flavored e-cigarette in the past 30 days (vs. tobacco-flavored or unflavored) (2023 MNYTS).

All residents of the Northeast Minnesota region deserve a life free from nicotine dependence.

Counter Tools Audit and Assessment Summary

117 audits were completed in Carlton Cook Lake and St Louis counties from March-June 2024, to assess the retail landscape of commercial tobacco product, price, price promotion, and placement. Raw data and other table summaries for counties are available in folders for your use.

When people make decisions about their health—or the health of their children—their options depend on what’s available in their community. Those options are shaped by local policies.

What can you do?

Many cities and counties in Minnesota have passed commercial tobacco and nicotine delivery product restrictions that save lives.

These provisions fall into a few categories, that can restrict access and exposure of commercial tobacco and nicotine delivery products including...

- Prohibiting coupons or discounts
- Limiting retailer density in neighborhoods that have experienced disproportionate advertising efforts by the tobacco industry
- Removing the sale of all flavored commercial tobacco products from retail locations
- Increasing price of tobacco products

Mental Health

- About 7 in 10 students who vape want to quit, and nearly two-thirds have tried to quit with some trying to quit 10 or more times (2023 MNYTS).
- In Minnesota, 55.9% of students who vape report symptoms of anxiety or depression compared to 30.7% of students overall (2023 MNYTS).
- Increasing dependence on nicotine leads to stronger withdrawal symptoms, which cause mood fluctuations and negative mood and can amplify or exacerbate stress, anxiety and symptoms of depression.



Although considerable progress has been made, there’s still much work to be done in preventing youth and adult use, and to help those who might already be hooked.

We all live in unique communities. One size typically doesn’t fit all when it comes to policies that help families be healthy.

We would encourage you to review local data and connect with your regional SHIP coordinator, Tylour Blakeman (blakemant@communityhealthboard.org) to learn more about your important role in supporting commercial tobacco free futures in your community.