



Increase the minimum legal sale age for tobacco products to 21

Minnesotans agree: We can do more to prevent kids from becoming addicted. A national consensus is growing to prevent addictions and future health problems by ensuring that those who sell tobacco products do so to those who are 21 and older. Minnesotans for a Smoke-Free Generation supports this movement.

- Raising the tobacco age to 21 will prevent youth tobacco use and save lives.
- The tobacco industry aggressively markets to youth and young adults to recruit replacement smokers and guarantee profits.
- There is broad support for raising the age and many cities and states around the country have taken action.

Raising the tobacco purchase age to 21 will prevent youth tobacco use and save lives.

- Almost 95 percent of addicted adult smokers start before age 21.¹
- Increasing the tobacco age will prevent 30,000 Minnesota kids from becoming smokers over the next 15 years.²
- The National Academy of Medicine reports that there would be a 25 percent reduction in smoking initiation among 15-to-17-year-olds if the tobacco age was raised to 21.³
- Raising the minimum age to 21 nationally would result in 223,000 fewer premature deaths and 50,000 fewer deaths from lung cancer.³
- Raising the tobacco purchase age will reduce teens' ability to buy tobacco products themselves or to access them through social sources.⁴

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- The U.S. Surgeon General has identified the tobacco industry as the root cause of the smoking epidemic through its promotion of tobacco products to youth.⁵
- The tobacco industry heavily targets 18-to-21-year olds. The tobacco industry continues to use tactics like candy flavoring, magazine advertisements and event sponsorships to attract young people to tobacco.^{6,7}
- "Raising the legal minimum age for cigarette purchase to 21 could gut our key young adult market (17-20) where we sell about 25 billion cigarettes and enjoy a 70 percent market share."⁸
- Innovative new tobacco products like e-cigarettes are highly attractive to youth.⁹

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- 75 percent of adult Americans favor increasing the minimum purchase age for tobacco to 21.⁶
- Hawaii and California were the first states to raise the age to purchase tobacco to 21.
- Edina was the first city in Minnesota to raise the tobacco age to 21.
- More than 220 localities in the United States have raised the age to purchase tobacco to 21, including Kansas City, Chicago, Cleveland, New York City and Boston.
- One locality, Needham, Massachusetts, increased the tobacco age to 21 in 2005. After increasing the age, Needham found that smoking among high-school students fell by nearly half.¹⁰

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- ¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Results from the 2010 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Summary of National Findings*. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration - Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality; September 2014 <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-DetTabs2014/NSDUH-DetTabs2014.pdf>.
- ² Boyle, Raymond. Tobacco 21: A life-saving opportunity we can't afford to miss. *MinnPost*. February 20, 2017.
- ³ Institute of Medicine. *Public Health Implications of Raising the Minimum Age of Legal Access to Tobacco Products*. National Academy Press. 2015.
- ⁴ Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. Increasing the Minimum Legal Sale Age for Tobacco Products to 21. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0376.pdf>.
- ⁵ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking: 50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health. 2014.
- ⁶ King BA, Jama AO, Marynak KL, Promoff GR. Attitudes Toward Raising the Minimum Age of Sale for Tobacco Among US Adults. *Am J Prev Med*. 2015; 49(4): 583-588.
- ⁷ Gemma JL (RJR Tobacco). Memorandum from JL Gemma, Marketing Development Department to Marketing Development Department Committee at RJ Reynolds Tobacco Co. Aug 16. 1985; <http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu/tid/xgm15d00/pdf>.
- ⁸ Philip Morris, "Discussion Draft Sociopolitical Strategy," January 21, 1986, Bates Number 2043440040/0049, <http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu/tid/aba84e00>.
- ⁹ Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. *Electronic Cigarettes and Youth*. <https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0382.pdf>.
- ¹⁰ Kessel Schneider S, Buka SL, Dash K, Winickoff JP, O'Donnell L. Community reductions in youth smoking after raising the minimum tobacco sales age to 21. *Tob Control*. 2015.