

LINN COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Tobacco Prevention and Education Program Update Fall 2023

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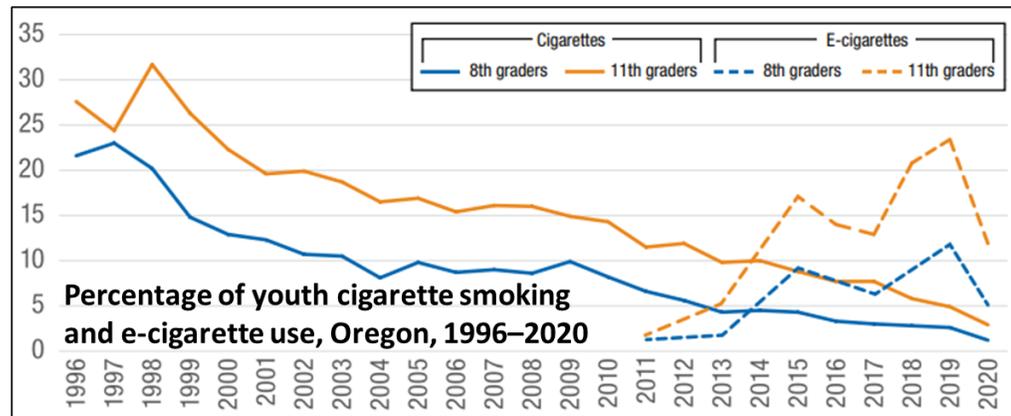
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Introduction

Tobacco-related deaths remain the number one cause of death in the United States, resulting in more than 480,000 deaths annually in the U.S. and 8,500 deaths in Oregon (Oregon Health Authority, 2021) (The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2023). Linn County is no stranger to the ill effects of tobacco, either. In 2022, 15,000 adults smoked cigarettes regularly and 8,700 people were living with a serious illness related to tobacco (See table page 5) (Oregon Health Authority, 2022).

While tobacco prevention efforts have yielded a 42% decrease in cigarette use over the last 25 years, the introduction of new products, such as vapes and e-cigarettes, has created a need for on-going



prevention and cessation efforts (Oregon Health Authority, 2021). Those efforts continue to take a layered approach to reduce the negative effects of commercial tobacco products, which are defined as the mass-produced, sold-for-profit items manufactured by companies for use in cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, cigars, and other products, and regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (The Truth Initiative, 2023). These are different from the sacred tobacco used for ceremonial and medicinal purposes by American Indian tribes, which is not associated with addiction or adverse health effects (The Truth Initiative, 2023).

In Oregon and Linn County, our efforts include:

- 1) Prevention of initiation of commercial tobacco use for our youth
- 2) Promoting quitting or cessation programs and resources
- 3) Reducing exposure to secondhand smoke
- 4) Eliminating health disparities

The following is an outline of current tobacco-related policies and prevention efforts in Oregon and Linn County:

Smoke-Free Environments – Linn County

Communities and organizations throughout Linn County have added smoke-free policies that prohibit smoking, e-cigarettes and vapes, and the use of commercial tobacco and marijuana products. Some of those ensuring smoke-free environments include:

- The Albany Public Library
- The Linn County service properties (Court House, Health Services and extension offices, and Armory)
- City of Lebanon parks
- City of Sweet Home parks
- All Samaritan Health Services properties

Similar policies have been passed by city councils and agencies throughout the state to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke to children and families, clients and patrons. Additional information about smoke-free properties can be found at:
<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PREVENTIONWELLNESS/TOBACCOPREVENTION/Pages/index.aspx>

Ballot Measure 108 – Commercial Tobacco Funding

The tobacco tax in Oregon was increased effective January 1, 2021, and these funds have provided an opportunity to increase direct investments in communities disproportionately impacted by commercial tobacco use, including black, indigenous, and Latino/a/x communities. Local community-based organizations across Oregon, like the Linn Benton Lincoln Health Equity Alliance and Casa Latinos Unidos, were awarded monies toward tobacco prevention and health equity work in Linn County in 2023 (Oregon Legislature, 2020).

Tobacco Retail Licensing (TRL) – State of Oregon

As of January 1, 2022, all retailers in Oregon that sell commercial tobacco, nicotine, or vaping products are required to obtain an annual license through the Oregon Department of Revenue (State of Oregon, 2022). The TRL was created to increase retailer knowledge, increase compliance of federal and state tobacco and vaping product regulation laws, help reduce youth access to tobacco and nicotine products, and allow Oregon to monitor local sales, exposure to tobacco marketing, retailer density, and sales compliance. In 2023, Linn County had 117 tobacco retail licenses managed by the Department of Revenue with 54 licenses in Albany and 26 county licenses within 1,000 feet of a school. Additional data related to the tobacco retail licenses and recent underage buys can be found on page 4 and 5. More information on the TRL requirements can be found at:

www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/PREVENTIONWELLNESS/TOBACCOPREVENTION/Pages/retailers.aspx

Alternative-to-Suspension School Policies – Greater Albany Public Schools (GAPS)

In February 2022, Greater Albany Public School board revised its policy to reflect recommendations for alternatives to suspension for students found with tobacco products. Per the alternative to suspension policy recommended by the American Heart Association, students possessing or using tobacco and in violation of the school tobacco policy should not be suspended, expelled, or fined for possession of tobacco products (American Heart Association, 2021). GAPS' policy is based on these recommendations, which instead incorporates education and cessation strategies to guide students toward quitting commercial tobacco use while remaining fully engaged in their education.

More information on alternative-to-suspension options can be found at https://www2.heart.org/site/DocServer/AHA_Tobacco-Free_Schools_Toolkit.pdf and the Greater Albany Public School policy can be found at https://policy.osba.org/albany/J/JFCG_JFCH_JFCI%20D1.PDF

Tobacco Flavor Ban – State of Oregon

According to the 2022 Oregon Student Health Survey, more than 3 out of 4 of Oregon’s teens who used tobacco used flavored vaping products (Oregon Health Authority, 2022). Data from the Truth Initiative also showed that flavors play a significant role in drawing youth and young adults to tobacco products, and fruit, candy and menthol products are designed to appeal to that demographic (The Truth Initiative, 2021). In 2023, a bill to end the sale of flavored tobacco products in Oregon (including combustible and e-cigarette products) had bipartisan, bicameral support, and had successfully passed the House Healthcare Committee. The Senate walk-out stalled the bill. In order to demonstrate continued community support and a sense of urgency from a public health perspective, the Flavors Hook Oregon Kids coalition is asking cities, counties, and school boards across Oregon to approve resolutions calling on the State Legislature to finish the work to end the sale of flavored tobacco products statewide in 2025. More information can be found at:

www.flavorshookoregonkids.org



Linn County Tobacco Facts (2023)

Impacts of tobacco in Linn County



15,000

Adults who regularly smoke cigarettes

8,700

People with a serious illness caused by tobacco



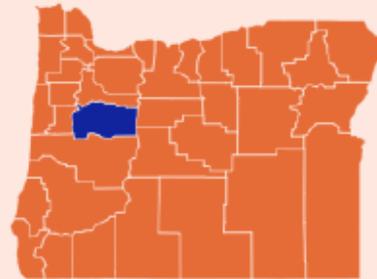
344

Tobacco-related deaths



9.6 Million

spent on tobacco-related medical care



Population

Adults	101,885
Youths	28,554
Total residents	130,440

126.0 Million

in productivity losses due to premature tobacco-related deaths

Tobacco Retail Licenses by the Numbers

- Linn County has **117** tobacco retail licenses, managed by the Oregon Department of Revenue (see county map).
- Albany has **54** licenses, the most for the county.
- Crawfordsville, Mill City, Shedd, and Tangent having the fewest with **1** each.
- Of the 117 tobacco retail licenses, **26** are within 1,000 feet of a school.

Oregon Health Authority. (2022). Linn County Tobacco Facts.
 Oregon Health Authority. (2023). 2023 Oregon Health Student Survey. Salem: State of Oregon.
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 State of Oregon. (2023). Tobacco Retail Licensing and Sales.

Among tobacco retailers assessed in Linn County



1 in 2

advertised tobacco or e-cigarettes outside the store



91%

sold flavored products (menthol, candy, ect.)



20%

sold products within 12" of toys, candy, gum, slushy/soda or ice cream



1 in 2

offered price promotions/discounts

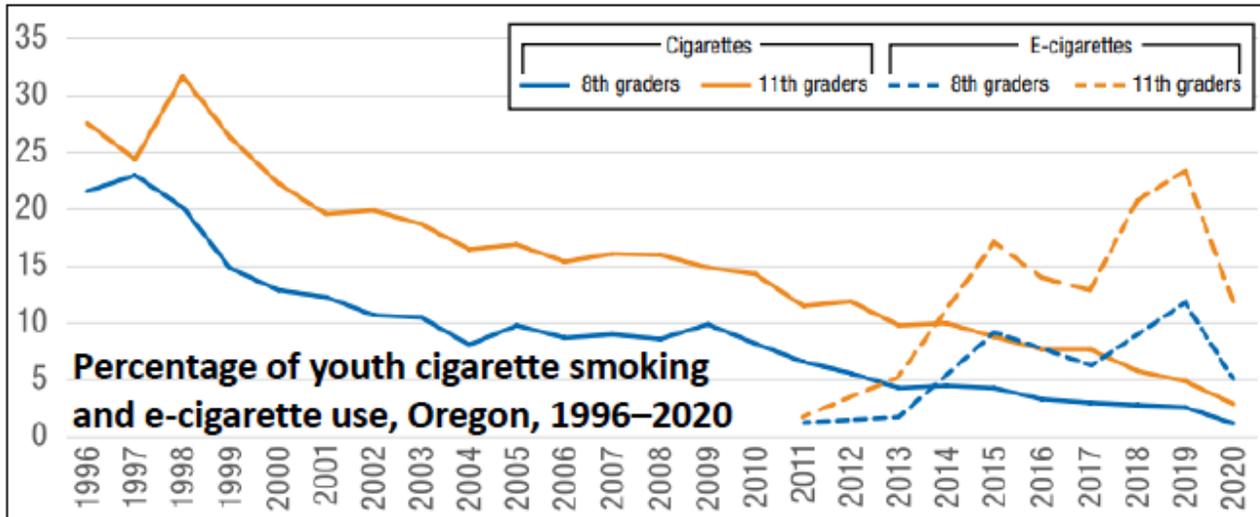


96%

advertised cigarillos for less than \$1

Linn County Tobacco Facts

Oregon Student Health Survey (2023)

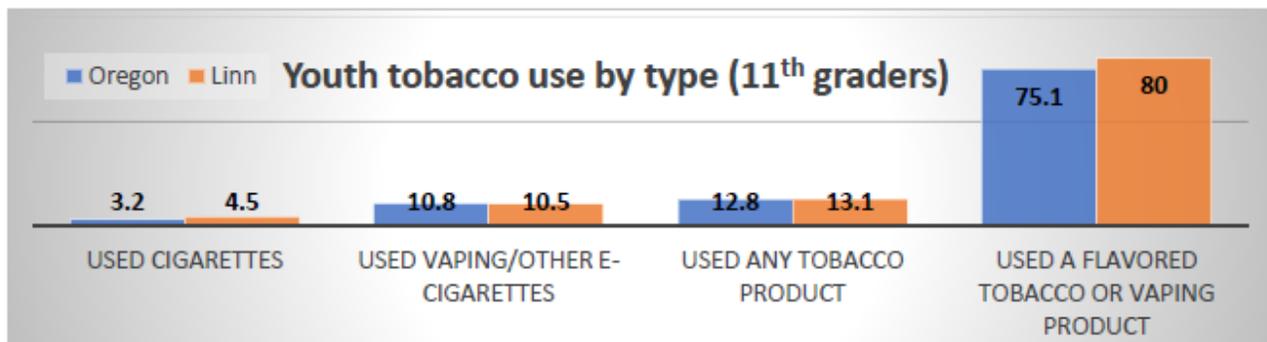
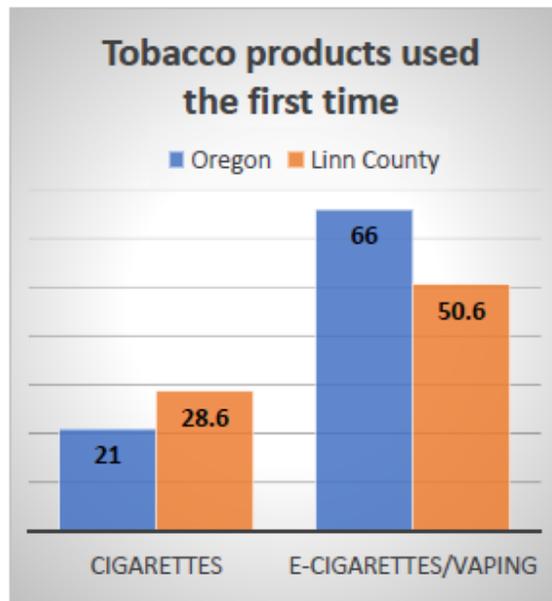


Over the last 20 years, tobacco prevention efforts have yielded a significant decreases in cigarette use in Oregon’s teens (see above).

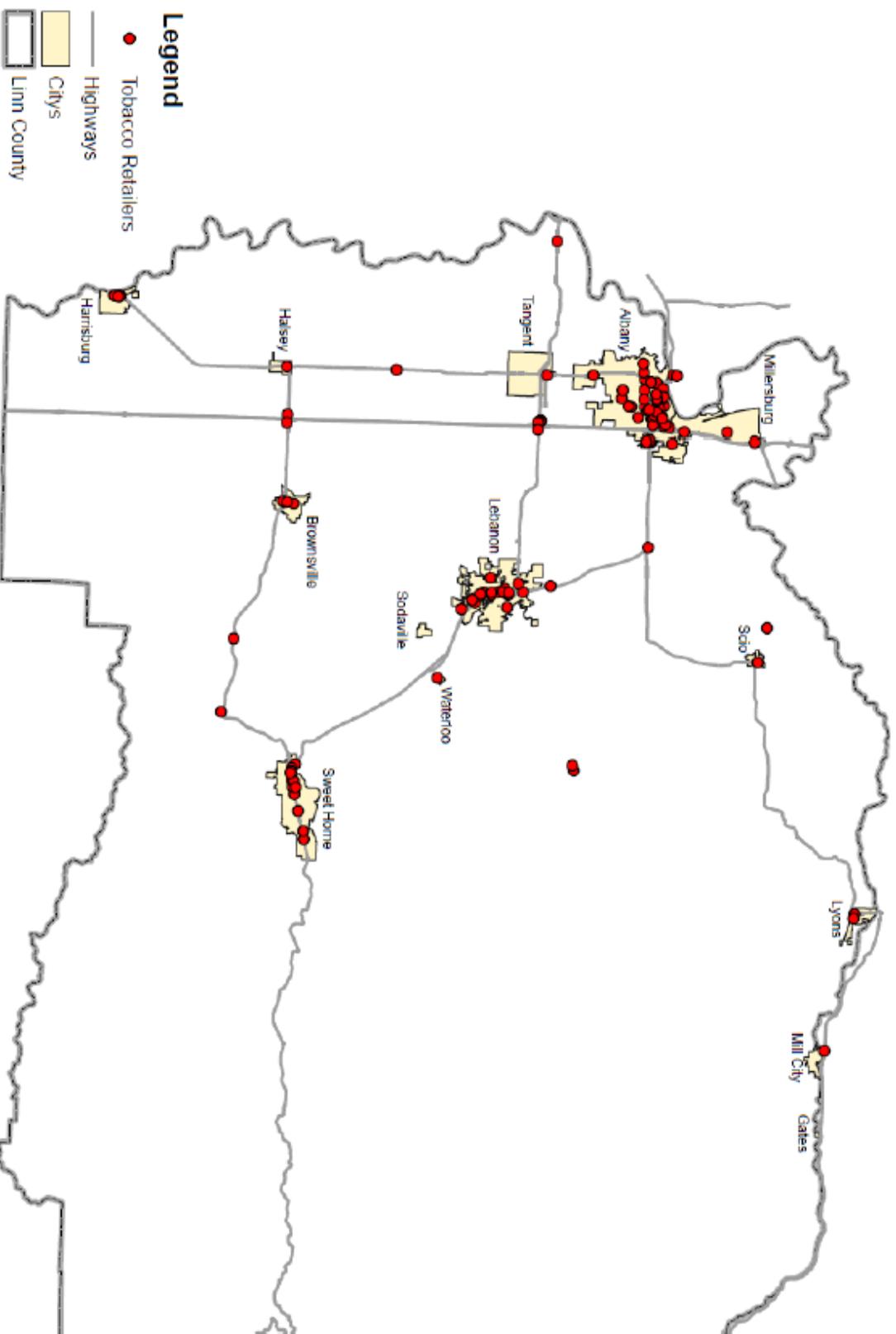
In 2022, 13.1% of Linn County 11th-graders used a tobacco product in the 30 days prior to the Student Health Survey. While cigarette use remains low among Linn County teens (4.5% of 11th graders), e-cigarette use continues to be an issue (10.5% of 11th graders). County 6th-graders (1.4%) and 8th-graders (6.9%) are below the state averages for use, 11th-graders exceed the state average of 11%.

In 2023, state-conducted underage buys in Linn County through the Tobacco Retail License requirements saw a fail rate of 33% for Linn stores, compared to the state rate of 25%. Almost all products sold to minors were vape/e-cigarettes.

Results from the 2023 Student Health Survey reflect those trends in teen tobacco use (see right and below).



Linn Co. Tobacco Retail Licenses 2023



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