



The California Department of Public Health – Office of Youth Tobacco Enforcement (OYTE) teams enforced the Stop Tobacco Access to Minors (STAKE) Act by conducting 85 minor decoy operations at licensed tobacco retailers throughout the state. Six of the locations sold to the underage decoy (7% violations rate), resulting in a civil citation and potential impact on their state tobacco retail license.

California Department of Tax and Fee Administration – Tax Investigations and Inspections Bureau (CDTFA) teams inspected retail locations throughout the state, at times with local agencies, resulting in dozens of criminal and civil citations:

In Fresno, the seizures all came from smoke shops. Untaxed cigarettes, cannabis, and flavored tobacco products were the main products seized, with the local enforcement agency seizing all flavored tobacco products at eight locations. High violation rates for mainly smoke shops were also evident in Southern California. Unstamped cigarettes, counterfeit stamps, non-MSA cigarettes, and cannabis seizures were common. CDTFA teams worked with the California Department of Justice: Tobacco Unit and Tax Recovery in the Underground Economy (TRUE), the San Bernardino Police Department, and San Diego Health and Human Services at some of the locations.

In Northern California, CDTFA seized 243 boxes of illegal products. Products seized included untaxed cigarette and tobacco products, cannabis, and unstamped cigarettes.

Chula Vista Police Department investigated problematic smoke shops. Upon inspecting the locations further, gambling, psilocybin mushroom chocolate bars, and/or THC/marijuana products were also found at those locations and seized.

Clovis Police Department assisted the Fresno Police Department and Code Enforcement along with CDTFA on inspections and did one of their own inspections in Clovis. That inspection netted them 20 boxes of flavored tobacco products and some cannabis products, most hidden in a back room.

Inglewood Police Department completed minor decoy operations at six locations, with three selling to the minor. They also completed 10 retail inspections and cited one retailer for not having a city permit.

Irvine Police Department completed 61 retail inspections, constituting nearly 70% of all tobacco retailers within city limits. Of the 61 retailers, 14 had violations, but all but three of the retailers corrected their violations before the end of Operation week. In the process, Irvine Police Department also contacted approximately 2,700 community members to educate and provide prevention and outreach, as well as handed out 2,500 informational materials to educate both retailers and the community.

The Los Angeles City Attorney's Office partnered with the Los Angeles Police Department to conduct minor decoy operations and inspections for flavored tobacco products. All 21 Los Angeles Police Department divisions participated. Overall, 148 retail locations were inspected. 21 retailers were cited for selling tobacco products to a minor; administrative citations were issued to 20 retailers for selling flavored tobacco products, and they were also able to cite a street vendor for selling unstamped cigarettes and found approximately 35 cartons. This same street vendor was previously cited for the



same offense – and had been found with 200 cartons of unstamped cigarettes. The Los Angeles City Attorney’s Office vertically prosecutes all tobacco offenses within their Tobacco Enforcement Office.

The Long Beach City Prosecutor’s Office worked with Long Beach Police Department and the Long Beach Health and Human Services to conduct 48 minor decoy operations. 10 retailers sold to the minor decoy, resulting in misdemeanor charges. Along with these operations, the office routinely files against habitually offending retailers (for flavored tobacco and self-service displays) and investigates internet sales of products to minors.

The Riverside County Sheriff’s Department conducted four minor decoy operations, 23 flavored tobacco inspections, nine routine inspections, and five single cigarette sales operations at a total of 42 retail locations in Temecula. Only one retailer had to be warned about tobacco products; there were no other violations found.

The Sacramento County Sheriff’s Office conducted minor decoy operations at 58 locations. Five retailers sold a tobacco product to a minor and were cited and three retailers were cited under the local ordinance for flavored tobacco products violations.

The Santa Cruz Police Department utilized its Community Service Officers to inspect four stores. Of these locations, two locations had flavored tobacco products, resulting in seizures. Those four retailers also netted three misdemeanors and 11 infractions for other tobacco related offenses.

The San Diego Health and Human Services Agency worked with CDTFA in Spring Valley. Of the 21 retailers visited, only three were compliant. Compliance Notices were issued, and follow-up inspections were scheduled.

Shasta County Health and Human Services conducted 16 retail inspections. During the inspections, the agency found seven violations for restrictions such as flavored tobacco products, self-service displays, and being unlicensed. Violations are written into reports and forwarded to the District Attorney’s Office.

The Sonoma County Department of Health Services was able to complete 15 retail inspections and undercover buys for flavored tobacco products. More than half of the locations had flavored tobacco products on display for sale or were suspected of selling these products. Reports for prosecution are being filed.

OPERATION UP IN SMOKE – Total counts

Retail inspection locations: 204

STAKE Act operation locations: 87

Minor Decoy operation locations: 245

Seizures of flavored tobacco products (including e-cigs): over \$1,000,000

Cannabis: approximately \$300,000

Untaxed/unstamped tobacco products (not e-cigs): over \$60,000