



Focus on fundraising as ClearWay MinnesotaSM sunsets

When the tobacco companies settled with The State of Minnesota and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (BCBS) in 1998, \$202 million of the \$6.2 billion settlement was assigned to ClearWay Minnesota, a nonprofit created to manage this part of the settlement. The court directed ClearWay to do programming to help people quit smoking. It was given 25 years to spend the money and then go out of existence.

ClearWay has provided the majority of funding for cessation and prevention programs in the state since its inception. ANSR receives about a third of



ANSR is seeking new funding to continue our work.

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our support

from ClearWay, so we are facing a hole in our budget.

In an effort to close the gap in funding, ANSR has embarked on new-to-us fundraising efforts, including submitting grant applications for federal funding from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to look at the environmental impacts of electronic cigarettes and seeking funding for policy work from local foundations, such as the Saint Paul and Bigelow Foundations. We will continue to pursue new funding opportunities as they arise.

Two metro communities receive Positive Community Norms grants

The Department of Human Services - Behavioral Health Division awarded nine communities in the state a Positive Community Norms (PCN) five-year grant. Two of those communities are here in the seven-county Metro area: Forest Lake and Inver Grove Heights. The two communities embark on the five-year PCN community grant starting July 2021. The state uses the Positive Community Norms strategy to help reduce youth substance misuse with the communities.

FDA Moves to End the Sale of Menthol Cigarettes, Flavored Cigars

The Biden Administration recently announced that they will move towards ending the sale of menthol cigarettes and flavored cigars. While the decision is long overdue, this action is a powerful and crucial step toward mitigating some of the disparities in health outcomes for BIPOC communities in our state, especially among Black Minnesotans.

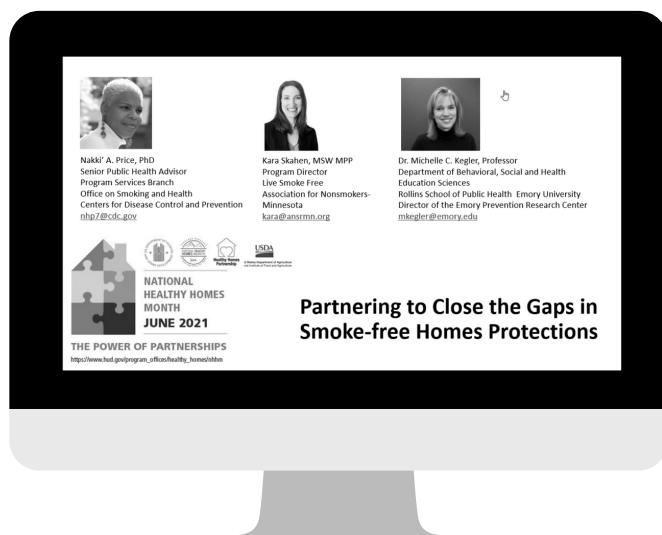
Menthol is not just another flavor. It is the primary money-making flavor for the tobacco industry and has long been targeted toward the Black community, the LGBTQ community, and youth. More than 80 percent of African Americans who smoke use menthol. This isn't an accident, but is the result of a multi-billion dollar effort by the tobacco industry to hook entire communities. It's not surprising these communities also face greater health disparities due to menthol tobacco use.

Since 2009, menthol has been the only flavored cigarette allowed on the marketplace, which has institutionalized disparities and cost precious lives, especially in the Black community.

For too long, the tobacco industry has been given leeway to continue to market and sell menthol cigarettes, which are known to be more addictive and difficult to quit than other tobacco. They have made an enormous profit while our communities suffer from the health consequences of tobacco addiction. The announcement by the FDA will kick off a rule-making process that will take at least a year. In the meantime, state and local leaders can act now to end the sale of menthol and all flavored tobacco products, including e-cigarettes, chew and flavored cigars. Strong flavored tobacco policies will address health disparities, reverse the youth tobacco epidemic and improve health for all Minnesotans.



Products such as Newport, KOOL, and Salem have caused tobacco-related health disparities in the Black and LGBTQIA communities.



On June 15, Live Smoke Free's Kara Skahen presented in "Partnering to Close the Gaps in Smokefree Homes Protections," a webinar of the Department of Housing and Urban Development's National Healthy Homes Month series. Co-presenters included Nakki' A. Price, PhD, MPhil, MPH, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Office on Smoking and Health and Michelle Kegler, DrPH, Emory Prevention Research Center, Rollins School of Public Health. The webinar focused on the importance of cross-sector partnership to increase smoke-free protections and promote health equity.

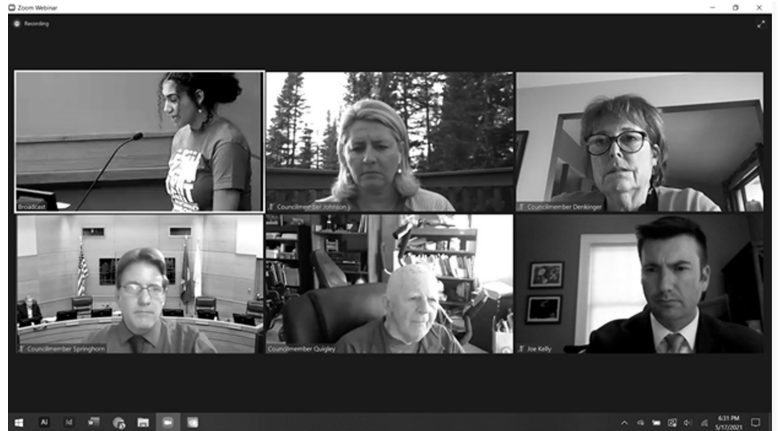
Shoreview includes menthol in flavored tobacco restrictions

One of the first cities in the Twin Cities to restrict the sale of flavored tobacco products, Shoreview strengthened that policy on May 17. The City Council voted unanimously to add menthol to its restriction on selling flavored tobacco products. Shoreview restricted the sale of flavored tobacco except menthol to 21-over tobacco shops in 2016. Menthol is the most popular and addictive flavor.

The tobacco industry uses these flavors to hook a new generation of users, resulting in addiction, disease and death. Eighty percent of youth tobacco users use flavored tobacco. Additionally, the industry has targeted Black communities with menthol for decades, creating immense health disparities. Shoreview council member Sue Denkinger said businesses would need to pivot. "This movement has been growing," Denkinger said. "The data in support of this policy and the support from students ... is overwhelming."

Shoreview resident Grace Plowman, a high school senior, spoke in favor of the ordinance. She also pointed out how the industry targets the Black community with menthol. "Menthol cigarettes tend to be marketed toward the Black community as well, and studies show that black people are more likely to smoke menthol cigarettes," Plowman said. "By banning the sale of menthol, the city will address racial equity."

Shoreview is the 18th Minnesota community to include menthol in its flavored tobacco restrictions. Ten of those cities completely ban all flavors.



Shoreview resident Grace Plowman testifies in favor of the proposed ordinance at the public hearing.

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Bloomington City Council members and staff discuss the proposed ordinance.

Bloomington prohibits all flavored tobacco sales, sunsets all licenses

Always a state-wide leader in protecting youth and residents from the harms of tobacco, Bloomington City Council voted 4-2 on April 26 to end the sale of all flavored tobacco products, including menthol.

The ordinance also provides for the official sunseting, or end, of all tobacco licenses in the city through attrition, a first of its kind ordinance in Minnesota. Bloomington will no longer issue new tobacco licenses. If a store with a tobacco license closes, that license will be eliminated. This will go into effect June 30, 2022.

The ordinance completely clears menthol, candy and fruit-flavored tobacco products from stores in Bloomington and will go into effect on Jan. 1. The tobacco industry uses these flavors to hook a new generation of users, resulting in addiction, disease and death. Eighty percent of youth tobacco users use flavored tobacco. Additionally, the industry has targeted Black communities with menthol for decades, creating immense health disparities.

“I am proud that Bloomington has joined the growing list of Minnesota cities deciding to end the sale of all flavored tobacco,” said council member Jenna Carter, a strong supporter of the ordinance. “Removing flavored tobacco, especially menthol, from stores in Bloomington will protect our youth and help alleviate health disparities.

“We have also taken a bold step toward a tobacco-free future here in our city. By no longer issuing new tobacco licenses and by sunseting existing licenses, we will one day live in a city free from the impacts of commercial tobacco sales.”

Bloomington is the 22nd Minnesota community to restrict the sale of flavored tobacco and the 17th to also restrict the sale of menthol. Ten of those cities completely ban flavors.

In June, the Minnesota Legislature reconvened for a special session to review the Governor's emergency powers and pass the biennial state budget. The state budget remained unresolved at the end of the regular session due to deep partisan disagreements over the major spending bills that will form the core of the next two-year budget.

While the special session was contentious, the House and Senate were able to send all of this year's omnibus budget bills to Gov. Tim Walz's desk to be signed into law before a new fiscal year began on July 1.

One of these bills was the omnibus Health and Human Services (HHS) policy and finance bill, which includes an additional \$4 million per year for tobacco prevention. This funding will allow Minnesota to more aggressively prevent tobacco addiction before it starts, including combating the youth e-cigarette epidemic and addressing racial disparities fueled by Big Tobacco. As ClearWay Minnesota sunsets this year, these new investments will help ensure our state has the resources needed to create a smoke-free generation.



\$4 million in tobacco prevention funding added to state budget

New oral nicotine products on the market

Oral nicotine pouches and lozenges are a new category of tobacco product that includes brands such as Zyn, On!, Velo and Frē. They come in many flavors including mango, cinnamon, honey lemon, citrus burst, black cherry, and many types of mint and menthol flavors. While these products do not contain leaf tobacco, they still contain nicotine which may be derived from tobacco.

The most popular of these products on the market is Zyn. Zyn is made by Swedish Match and comes in six flavors and two nicotine strengths. Zyn contains tobacco-derived nicotine salts, the same type of nicotine used in Juul to give it a cigarette-like "hit".



Products such as Zyn are gaining popularity among youth.

There is rising concern about youth use of oral nicotine products. The products come in an array of flavors and flavoring in tobacco products has been proven to appeal to youth. Truth Initiative tracking shows that 13% of 15-24 year olds surveyed in Fall 2020 were past 30-day users of these pouches. .

Oral nicotine products are not regulated as tightly as other tobacco products in the U.S. The FDA places some regulations on these products, including nicotine warning labels and basic marketing restrictions.

However, in Minnesota, local flavor restrictions and bans do apply to these products (as well as T21 statewide). Retailers need to ensure they are in compliance if they sell these oral nicotine products.



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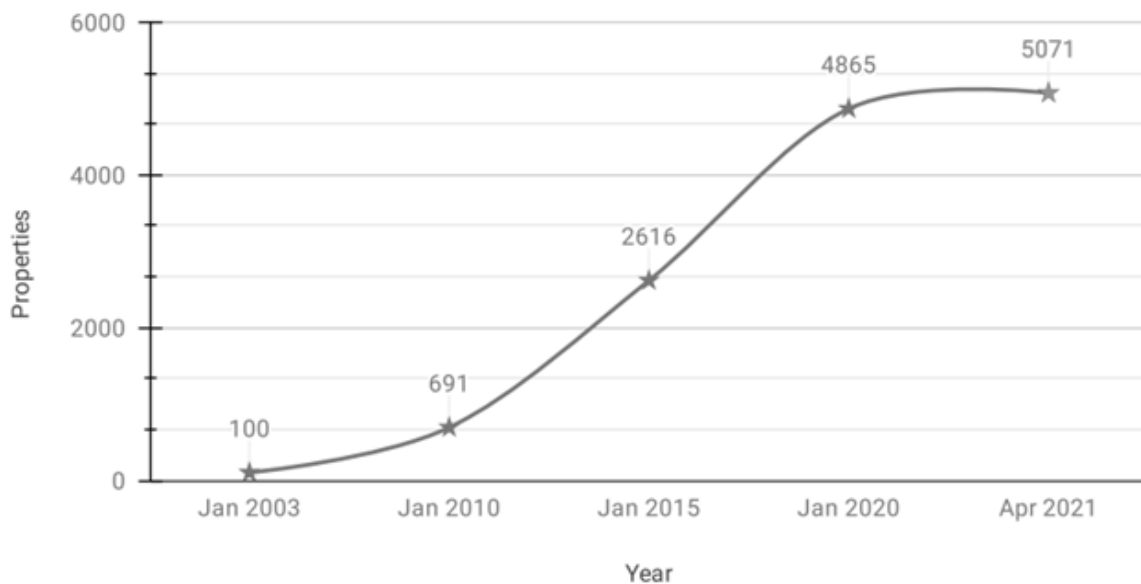
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Minnesota Reaches 5,000 Smoke-Free Properties!

MUH Smoke-Free Properties - MN

(Source: Live Smoke Free: Contact: info@mnsmokefreehousing.org)



Live Smoke Free has been tracking smoke-free housing policies in Minnesota since our program began in 2011. At that time we knew of approximately 50 smoke-free buildings in the state. Last month we broke 5,000!