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TOBACCO MARKETING UPDATE

What's New in Tobacco Marketing?

Loon MN Rebranding Initiatives

During late summer, Attorney General Keith Ellison held a press conference to announce his office sent warning letters to over 5,000 Minnesota tobacco retailers, urging them to stop selling unauthorized and illegal vapor products. These include vapes and oral nicotine products not approved by the FDA and products that fall under [Minnesota's new deceptive vapor products law](#) (i.e., vapes that resemble school supplies, candy, or other kid-friendly, non-vapor products).

Since this announcement, Loon MN has started to rebrand product flavors and names. The first notification to email subscribers regarding the changes came on October 1, 2024. This notification stated, "due to new legislation from the Attorney General's office, several of our products will no longer be available in Minnesota. Some flavors will be permanently discontinued, while others may return under new names in compliance with updated regulations".

The first rebrand came soon after on October 7, 2024. The product, Loon Reload Shots, was rebranded to Loon Refills. Along with the name rebrand, the exterior imagery also changed.

In December, Loon Maxx products changed the name of two flavored products and released two new flavors altogether.

The flavor Bowzer Berry was rebranded to Kiwi Berry. The flavor Banana Taffy was also rebranded to Banana. The two new flavors launched are Frozen Melon and Strawberry Lemonade.



Above: Email received from Loon MN on October 1, 2024 about the upcoming changes to product names and imagery.



Kiwi Berry

Formerly recognized as Bowzer Berry

Left: Email received from Loon MN on December 13, 2024 sharing the rebranding of Loon Maxx products.

Anyone can report retailers who market or sell illegal products to the AG's Office by emailing vaping@ag.state.mn.us. Read the press release at https://www.ag.state.mn.us/Office/Communications/2024/08/29_VapingProducts.asp.

Congratulations Vadnais Heights!

The Vadnais Heights City Council voted unanimously in November to end the sale of menthol and all other flavored commercial tobacco products and cap tobacco retail licenses. The tobacco industry targets youth by using colorful packaging and addictive flavors such as blue raspberry. Congratulations to Vadnais Heights for putting a stop to flavors and putting community health over industry profits!



TOBACCO MARKETING UPDATE

Questions or want to subscribe?

Contact Molly Schmidtke

☎ 651-646-3005

✉ molly@ansrmn.org

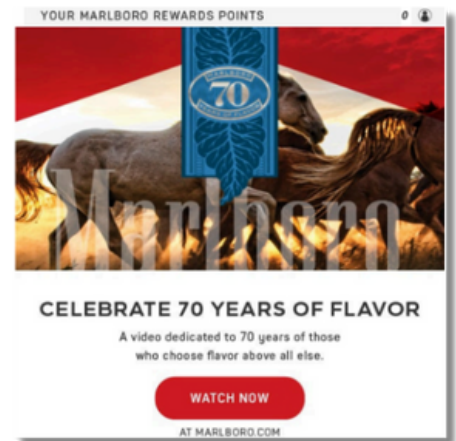
Tobacco Industry Celebrates Decades of Addiction

To celebrate 90 years of existence, Skoal smokeless tobacco released a retro tin design. Skoal failed to mention 90 years of [increased risk for heart disease, stroke, cancer and other negative oral health impacts](#). In 2021, [approximately 5.2 million adults in the United States reported current smokeless tobacco use](#).



Left: Email received from Skoal on Sept. 9, 2024 promoting their retro tin designs to celebrate 90 years. **Right:** Email received from Marlboro on July 1, 2024 celebrating 70 years.

Marlboro also celebrated 70 years of the company. To celebrate, Marlboro launched a giveaway where subscribers had a chance to win a grand prize of \$250,000 as well as weekly prizes ranging for \$50-\$500. In 2022, [approximately 28.8 million U.S. adults currently used cigarettes](#).



Industry Performative Justice Strikes Again

Project Watch continues to track and identify tobacco industry’s performative social justice throughout its existence. For decades, commercial tobacco control has witnessed tobacco industry donate funds and host community events while addicting millions to their products. Companies like Zyn and Loon MN try to paint themselves as a corporation that cares in order to attract loyal customers.



Above: Email received from Zyn on Nov. 4, 2024 sharing their latest donation to communities affected by hurricane damage.

Zyn’s latest exhibition is donating to hurricane relief efforts. Zyn donated \$1 million across six states for hurricane relief to help rebuild communities affected by Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton.

Loon MN hosted their second annual Thanksgiving Turkey Drive. Promoted primarily through social media, Loon MN hosted three pick-up locations across the Minnesota metro area for community members to pick up turkey. In one social media video, one community member stated, “they’re showing love to the community”.

Right: Instagram post from Nov. 5, 2024 promoting the second annual turkey drive.

