

Information on Tobacco & Vaping (Updated: 3/20/24)

POSITION OF THE BOARD OF HEALTH: The health hazards of smoking and nicotine are well-documented. As public health advocates, we highly recommend giving up smoking, vaping, and all other forms of nicotine consumption. However, as your elected public health officials, we aim to assure compliance with local, state & federal regulations governing the sale and use of tobacco and vaping products. Key among these is the prohibition of sales to minors (under 21) and the prohibition of flavored tobacco products/enhancers, with the aim of preventing underage smoking. Our corollary goal for vendor compliance is avoiding the very steep penalties of violations under the Commonwealth's [New Tobacco Law of 2019](#), codified under 105 CMR 665 in 2020, restricting the sale of flavored tobacco and vape products, among other regulations. We are grateful for your assistance in keeping our youth safe and our businesses legally compliant. [New entry below highlighted]

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL & PREVENTION (CDC): The CDC is a federal website for verifiable health information. The CDC's information is periodically updated to reflect the best science available. Key CDC websites for information on the effects of smoking and vaping include:

- [Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking](#): Cigarette smoking damages nearly every organ in the body. It is the leading cause of preventable deaths in the US.
- [Electronic Cigarettes \(e-Cigarettes\)](#): e-Cigarettes deliver nicotine as an aerosol, otherwise known as vaping. Potentially, vaping offers some benefit over smoking in avoiding the tobacco leaf tar. However, vaping is not safe for youth, during pregnancy or if you are not a tobacco smoker to begin with.
- [Secondhand Smoke](#): Secondhand smoke contains numerous toxic chemicals that can affect the health of nonsmokers, particularly children & individuals with asthma or other respiratory conditions.
- [Youth & Tobacco Use](#): If cigarette smoking continues at the current rate among youth in this country, 5.6 million of today's Americans under 18 will die early from a smoking-related illness (about 1 in 13).

MASS.GOV: The Commonwealth's web pages offer up-to-date information on vaping and tobacco use.

- [Massachusetts Tobacco Dashboard](#): [New entry 3/20/2024] The main state resource *Massachusetts Tobacco Statistics, Reports, and Publications*, updated in October 2023, is where you can find how tobacco impacts your health, view tobacco statistics in Massachusetts, and explore tobacco-related reports and publications. There are interactive maps on smoking statistics by community. Disturbingly, Adams has one of the top 10 smoking rates in the state (about twice the state average; North Adams is the highest with 3 times the state average).
- [Get Outraged!](#) is Massachusetts' public information campaign to expand awareness of the tactics that the tobacco and vaping industries use to hook their next generation of customers: our kids. The program seeks to correct misinformation spread by the vaping industry that vaping is safer than smoking. Get Outraged! provides basic informational materials as well as links to resources for parents, youth and schools.
- [Make Smoking History](#): This familiar and useful site, sponsored by the Department of Public Health, provides many resources for smoking cessation. A notable feature is the "Tobacco in your Community" tool, with which you can download a factsheet on any Massachusetts city or town. It will ultimately move to Mass.gov.
- [Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program](#) is "dedicated to reducing the health and economic burden of tobacco use" in the Commonwealth. The MTCP program provides information on Massachusetts tobacco laws, available support for tobacco and vaping cessation, and information on youth smoking and vaping, as well as links to report tobacco-related violations.

SMOKING CESSATION RESOURCES: Find the best program to quit or to help someone you love.

- [Tobacco-Free Community Partnership](#): The Berkshire TFCP is a state-funded program to support communities' efforts to help people quit using tobacco, prevent youth from starting, and protect everyone from secondhand smoke. Part of Berkshire Area Health Education Center ([Berkshire AHEC](#)), the Partnership is available to assist groups and municipalities in these efforts.
- CDC Smokers' Helpline: 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) will provide free coaching and other resources for those seeking to quit smoking or vaping.
- [CDC's Quit Smoking Web Page](#): How to quit and smoking cessation strategies.

STATE & LOCAL REGULATIONS:

- [Massachusetts New Tobacco Control Law](#) (NTL) Enacted in November 2019, and codified under 105 CMR 665 in 2020, the NTL restricts the sale and consumption of flavored tobacco and nicotine vaping products to licensed smoking bars.
- [Adams Tobacco Sales Regulations](#) (adopted 2020, revised 2021 and 2024): Our regulations cap the number of Tobacco Product Sales Permits in Adams, starting with a cap 12 permits on November 1, 2020, with the goal to reduce the number of allowable permits to 9 (approximately 1/1000 residents) by an annual attrition of 1 available permit per year. The cap of 9 permits was reached on November 1, 2023. The 10 tobacco vendors holding Tobacco Product Sales Permits as of January 31, 2024, are protected from the cap as they also held permits on November 1, 2020. However, any permit not renewed, either because a retailer no longer sells tobacco products or closes the retail business, shall be returned to, and be permanently retired by the Adams Board of Health, thereby achieving our adopted limit of 9 active Tobacco Product Sales Permits. This will remain the limit unless changed by the Board of Health. Any further applicant for a Tobacco Product Sales Permit will be placed on a waiting list until one becomes available.

OTHER RESOURCES:

- [The 84 Movement](#): The 84 represents the 84% of Massachusetts youth who did NOT smoke when the movement began. Now, 93.4% of youth do NOT smoke.
- [MA Interscholastic Athletic Association](#): The MIAA Handbook describes the penalties for violations of Rule 62, which prohibits vaping and tobacco use among scholastic athletes. There is also a link to a downloadable explanatory [Rule 62 Brochure](#).
- [Truth Initiative](#): Truth Initiative is America's largest nonprofit public health organization dedicated to a future where tobacco and nicotine addiction are things of the past. Their mission is to achieve a culture where young people reject smoking, vaping, and nicotine.
- [Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids](#): In addition to offering a wealth of information, CTFK has an "Industry Watch" tool and sponsors a national "[Kick Butts Day](#)" (usually the end of March).
- [Partnership to End Addiction](#): This non-governmental organization provides a free guide for parents to help prevent their children from using vape products.
- [Disposal of E-Liquid and Vape Batteries](#): The FDA's guide for safe disposal of e-liquid and vaping batteries, which may pose a threat to human health and the environment if not disposed of properly.

Please feel free to contact the Health Department Office (<https://town.adams.ma.us/board-health>; 413-743-8300 x179) or myself (drhoads@town.adams.ma.us). Thank you for doing your part! - David B. Rhoads, Ph.D., Chair