



**CALIFORNIA TOBACCO
ENDGAME CENTER FOR
ORGANIZING AND ENGAGEMENT**

A project of the American Heart Association®

Raising our Voices Against Tobacco for Our Environment

California has come a long way in the fight against tobacco, yet the tobacco industry continues to thwart our efforts and to addict new users each and every day. Our most critical work lies ahead of us.

Tobacco product waste seriously impacts the health of our environment. Cigarette butts continue to be the #1 litter item found on beaches and roadsides and represent 34% of the total litter collected in California, which is a danger to our wildlife, parks, beaches and communities.^{1,2,6}

Tobacco product waste impacts the health of our environment

- California agencies spend over \$41 million each year on tobacco waste cleanup.^{2,6}
- In 2017, on ONE DAY, nearly 200,000 cigarette butts were removed from California beaches and inland waterways as part of the annual International Coastal Cleanup.³
- Littered cigarette butts have been linked to costly, destructive wildfires which threaten both wildlife and communities.⁷
- Cigarette butts release toxic chemicals into the environment including arsenic, lead, and nicotine.¹
- Children, pets, and wildlife can be poisoned by discarded cigarette butts or e-liquid residue.
- Toxic chemicals in tobacco waste threaten our precious aquatic ecosystems and are toxic to freshwater micro-organisms.^{4,5}

Tribal

- California tribal gaming operations represent nearly 100% of the funding source for tribal governments. Tribal Casinos represent the main means of revenues for their governments to deliver healthcare, public safety, education, and more.
- COVID-19: The health and safety guidelines that Tribal Governments are implementing exceed those of the CDC and in many cases are even more stringent than existing open businesses and more cautious than what surrounding jurisdictions require. Several Tribal Gaming facilities have made the decision to re-open 100% smoke-free indoors such as Spotlight 29, Bear River, Pechanga and Cahuilla while others have specific designated indoor smoking areas.

The California Tobacco Endgame Center for Organizing and Engagement

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COVID-19 and tobacco are a deadly combination

- Research shows that smoking is most likely associated with people getting sicker from COVID-19.^{8,11}
- Smoking weakens your immune system and your body's ability to fight infections such as COVID-19.⁹
- COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted African American, Latino/Hispanic, Tribal Communities, LGBTQ, Rural and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders - some of the same communities hardest hit by tobacco industry targeting and the disease and death caused by tobacco.
- People who smoke or vape and get COVID-19 virus are at increased risk of developing more severe symptoms.^{9,11}
- Smoking, vaping or using a hookah can spread COVID-19 as users are repeatedly putting their hands to their mouths and faces, often in a social setting.¹⁰

While we are fighting a deadly pandemic, there is a teen vaping epidemic in this state.

- Governor Gavin Newsom signed an executive order to confront the growing youth epidemic and health risks linked to vaping.
- Vaping devices are the most commonly used tobacco product in California.
- More than 80 percent of high-school students who consume tobacco use a vaping device.
- Of the California teens who consume tobacco products, including vape products, 86.4% report using a flavored tobacco product.
- The tobacco and vaping industry use flavors to attract teens to vaping.



SOURCES

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- ⁴ Slaughter, E., Gersberg, R., Watanabe, K., Rudolph, J., Novotny, T.E., *Toxicity of Cigarette Butts, and their Chemical Components to Marine and Freshwater Fish, *Atherinops affinis* and *Pimephales promelas**, Tobacco Control, 2011.
- ⁵ Moerman JW, Potts GE. *Analysis of Metals Leached from Smoked Cigarette Litter*, Tobacco Control, 2011.
- ⁶ California Department of Transportation. *Don't Trash California*. Frequently Asked Questions.
- ⁷ American for Nonsmokers' Rights, *Tobacco Environmental Toll*. ANR Update, 2008.
- ⁸ Preliminary Estimates of the Prevalence of Selected Underlying Health Conditions Among Patients with Coronavirus Disease 2019 — United States, February 12–March 28, 2020. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2020;69:382–386. DOI:
<http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6913e2>
- ⁹ Vardavas CI, Nikitara K. COVID-19 and smoking: A systematic review of the evidence. *Tob Induc Dis*. 2020;18:20. Published 2020 Mar 20. doi:10.18332/tid/119324
- ¹⁰ Al-Delaimy, Wael. Hookah and COVID-19: How Hookah Puts You at Risk, 2020, tobaccofreeca.com/health/hookah-and-covid-19-how-hookah-puts-you-at-risk/.
- ¹¹ Tong, Elisa. "Protect Yourself from COVID-19: Stop Smoking and Vaping Now." TobaccoFreeCA, 2020, tobaccofreeca.com/health/covid-19-stop-smoking-and-vaping/.



Social Media



Raise your voice against Big Tobacco that is actively trashing our environment and homes. Tobacco litter pollutes by releasing chemicals including arsenic and lead.

Join us:

organizingtoendtobacco.org/virtualdayofaction2020
#VoicesAgainstTobacco



Your environment needs you to raise your voice against Big Tobacco: our precious aquatic ecosystems are littered with cigarette butts and polluted with deadly chemicals including.

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