



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The American Lung Association's *State of Tobacco Control 2012* report tracks progress on key tobacco control policies at the state and federal levels. The report assigns grades to the states in four key areas — tobacco prevention and control spending, smokefree air, cigarette tax and cessation coverage. The grades are based on tobacco control laws and regulations in effect as of January 1, 2012 and are available at www.stateoftobaccocontrol.org.

With very few exceptions, 2011 was an abysmal year for state tobacco control measures across the country. Once a national leader in tobacco control policies, California now earns mixed results. While California earned an A for smokefree air policies, the state receives an F for failing to adequately fund tobacco prevention and control programs, another F for poor coverage of smoking cessation treatments and services, and a D for its low cigarette tax. Among the 50 states and the District of Columbia, California now ranks 33rd for its \$.87 per pack tax, far below the national average of \$1.46.

While the national grades reflect important policies that the state of California should take steps to improve, there is more that can be done locally. There are millions of people in California who are still affected by tobacco, tens of thousands of youth become smokers each year and untold numbers of Californians are impacted by secondhand smoke. Leadership and solutions to these problems can come from every level of government. Local elected officials can and should take steps to protect the residents of their communities from tobacco and secondhand smoke by passing policies to restrict smoking in parks and other outdoor areas, require apartment units to be nonsmoking and prevent illegal sales of tobacco products to youth.

“Nearly 90 percent of people who smoke start before the age of 18, including my mother who began smoking as a teenager and died too young from lung cancer. I do not want other families to suffer the same kind of loss. That’s why it is so important to pass policies that keep tobacco products out of the hands of kids.”

Jason Knowles,
Sacramento Resident and
American Lung Association in California Volunteer

Therefore, in coordination with the national report, the American Lung Association in California releases its *State of Tobacco Control 2012 – California Local Grades* report to track how well

California cities and counties are doing to protect Californians from the burden of tobacco. The *State of Tobacco Control 2012 – California Local Grades* report is based on a review of the county code and city municipal code in three key areas —smokefree outdoor air, smokefree multi-unit housing and reducing tobacco sales. The 2012 report includes grades for every city and county in California. This includes grades for all 58 counties (which cover the unincorporated areas of the county) and all 482 of the incorporated cities and towns in California.

The purpose of the *State of Tobacco Control 2012 – California Local Grades* report is to increase public knowledge about local laws and policies that help protect residents from the deadly toll of tobacco and to encourage local leadership where improvement is needed. The grades are not intended to reflect the efforts of local tobacco control coalitions, the broader public health community or organizations working to advance local tobacco control policies. Instead, responsibility for enacting these life- and revenue-saving policies falls to the elected officials in each community.

For the American Lung Association in California's *State of Tobacco Control 2012 – California Local Grades* report, grades are awarded in three categories: (1) Smokefree Outdoor Air; (2) Smokefree Housing; and (3) Reducing Sales of Tobacco Products. These three grades are then averaged for one Overall Tobacco Control grade.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT

45 Cities and Counties Raised Their Grades in 2011

In 2011, 45 municipalities adopted local ordinances in at least one of the three categories that are included in the *State of Tobacco Control 2012* report and raised their grades. Elected officials in these cities and counties showed great leadership in adopting policies to protect their residents and improve the health of their community. Policies passed in 2011 include nine ordinances to require a certain percentage of multi-unit housing to be designated nonsmoking, 31 ordinances to restrict smoking in outdoor areas and six ordinances to require tobacco retailers to obtain a license in order to sell tobacco products. This is an improvement over last year when 38 cities and counties raised their grades. See the “Cities and Counties on the Rise” section of the report (page 6) for the full list of municipalities that passed policies in 2011.

Three New Cities Earn an A Grade for Overall Tobacco Control Grade

In the past year Baldwin Park, Compton and Pasadena have all passed strong tobacco control ordinances and now receive an overall A grade in the *State of Tobacco Control 2012* report. Combined with the nine municipalities that earned an A grade on last year’s report, there are now 12 municipalities that earn an A grade for Overall Tobacco Control grade. The other nine cities and counties are Albany, Calabasas, Contra Costa County, Glendale, Richmond, Santa Clara County, South Pasadena, Temecula and Union City. These cities have demonstrated that there is public support and political will for strong tobacco control policies and set a high bar for other communities.

Nearly Two-thirds of all Municipalities Receive an F Grade

Despite the fact that many cities and counties adopted strong tobacco control policies this past year, a majority of cities and counties in California are failing to protect their residents from the dangers of tobacco use. In total, 355 municipalities (66 percent of all municipalities) receive an F grade for their Overall Tobacco Control grade.

Alameda, Compton and Larkspur Made the Largest Grade Improvements

These three cities have demonstrated great leadership by passing strong tobacco control ordinances in two of the three grade categories this year to improve their Overall Tobacco Control grade by four letter grades from their grade in last year’s report. Compton improved from a D grade to an A grade and both Alameda and Larkspur improved from an F grade to a B grade.

“No matter how big or small the city or county, local tobacco control policies save lives and money.”

Marsha Ramos,
Former Burbank Mayor and Chair-elect,
American Lung Association in California

