

California has once again established itself as a national leader in the fight against Big Tobacco.

In 2016, the American Lung Association in California led efforts to make sweeping changes across multiple areas of tobacco control. In November, voters overwhelmingly approved a \$2 per pack tobacco tax increase, the first in nearly 20 years, and one which will for the first time apply to e-cigarettes. Also in 2016, California became the second state in the nation to raise the minimum age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21 years old. Legislation was also approved to close loopholes in the state's smokefree workplace laws and to regulate e-cigarettes as tobacco products. All of these regulations will reduce smoking rates and save lives.

The American Lung Association *State of Tobacco Control 2017* national report tracks progress on key tobacco control policies at the state and federal levels as of January 2, 2017. The report assigns grades to every state in five key areas. This year's national report will reflect improvements in California's grades for tobacco taxes and smokefree air, along with an 'incomplete' (reflecting the budget increase resulting from the new tobacco tax, which goes into effect after the report's release) rather than an F for tobacco prevention and cessation funding. California also received a 'B' in the new grade category for minimum age to purchase. The national report can be viewed in full at: www.lung.org/SOTC.

Despite the significant progress that will be made as a result of these improvements, the fight against the harms caused by tobacco remains monumental. Tobacco continues to be the number one cause of preventable death in California. Over one-quarter of all cancer deaths in California are attributable to smoking, and over 16,000 kids start smoking each year.

2016 Accomplishments



Tobacco tax increased from \$0.87 to \$2.87



Minimum age to purchase increased from 18 to 21

Samir Ibrahim, Lung Cancer Patient



“As a lung cancer survivor, I deal with the threat of exposure to secondhand smoke every day. As an individual I have tried to protect myself and others with lung illness who are exposed to cigarette smoke in their apartments, but it is really a hard process. I'm grateful for the cities and counties that have implemented smokefree multi-unit housing policies to protect their residents and look forward to the day when we can all live free of secondhand smoke exposure.”

While the state has made significant strides against tobacco this year, there is still important work that is best done at the community level. Local elected officials have the power to further protect their citizens from the reach of Big Tobacco.

That is why, in coordination with the national report, the American Lung Association in California releases its *State of Tobacco Control – California Local Grades* report to track how well California municipalities protect their citizens from the burden of tobacco. The *State of Tobacco Control 2017 – California Local Grades* report is based on a review of county and municipal codes in four key areas for all 58 counties (which cover the unincorporated areas of the county) and 482 incorporated cities and towns in the state. Since the first such report, the number of communities with an overall A or B grade has increased dramatically.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS YEAR'S REPORT INCLUDE:

For the first time ever,

20+

communities received an overall **A GRADE**

More than a dozen communities increased their grade from

F to A

in at least one policy area

Fewer communities received overall F grades

12 fewer

compared to 2016 report

The purpose of the *State of Tobacco Control 2017 – California Local Grades* report is to increase public knowledge about local laws that protect residents from the deadly toll of tobacco and to encourage local leadership to take action where improvement is needed. Leadership on key issues and solutions to these difficult problems can come from every level of government. Local elected officials can, and should, take steps to protect residents from tobacco and secondhand smoke.

State of Tobacco Control - California Local Grades Database

The American Lung Association in California is excited to announce the launch of its State of Tobacco Control Local Grades Database in 2017. For the first time, local grades can be easily accessed by searching any county and community in the state.

www.stateoftobaccocontrol.org/california2017citysearch