



E-cigarettes: What we know

What are e-cigarettes?

- E-cigarettes are typically battery-operated devices containing nicotine and other chemicals that produce a vapor that is inhaled.¹
- Most e-cigarettes are designed to look like cigarettes, but some resemble everyday items such as pens.
- E-cigarettes do not contain tobacco, but many contain varying levels of nicotine, which is the addictive chemical found in tobacco products.

Are e-cigarettes safe to use?

- E-cigarettes are not currently regulated by the Food and Drug Administration. There is no way for consumers to know what types or concentrations of potentially harmful chemicals are found in e-cigarettes or how much nicotine they are inhaling.^{2,3}
- Early studies show that e-cigarettes have lower levels of toxic chemicals than conventional cigarettes.^{4,5,6}
- There have been no long-term studies conducted on e-cigarettes, so the lasting impact on the health of users and of those exposed to secondhand vapor is unknown.

Can e-cigarettes help people quit smoking?

- There is no conclusive scientific evidence that e-cigarettes are effective in helping people stop smoking.
- Until more is known, people looking to quit should use FDA-approved smoking cessation aids that are shown to be safe and effective, such as nicotine gum, lozenges and patches.
- Free quitting assistance is available to all Minnesotans through QUITPLAN® Services by calling 1-888-354-PLAN or visiting www.quitplan.com.

Why should communities care about e-cigarettes?

- Some advertisements for e-cigarettes encourage smokers to use them in places where they cannot use conventional cigarettes.^{7,8}
- E-cigarettes can complicate enforcement of smoke-free laws, as it may be difficult to distinguish e-cigarettes from conventional cigarettes.
- E-cigarettes often have candy flavors such as gummy bear and cotton candy, and research shows that flavored tobacco products appeal to children and teens.⁹
- A CDC study found that use of e-cigarettes among middle and high school students increased between 2011 and 2012.¹⁰
- The three largest tobacco companies (Philip Morris, R.J. Reynolds and Lorillard) have their own e-cigarette product lines and are putting significant time and money into promoting these new products.¹¹



Communities can regulate e-cigarettes

How does Minnesota law treat e-cigarettes?

- In Minnesota, e-cigarettes are taxed as tobacco products and it is illegal to sell them to minors.¹²
- Currently, using e-cigarettes does not meet the definition of “smoking” under the Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act – so using them in indoor public places, such as bars and restaurants, is not against state law.
- Since Minnesota workplaces became smoke-free in 2007, clean indoor air has become the standard and 87 percent of Minnesotans support the statewide smoke-free law.¹³
- A majority of Minnesotans – 79 percent – would support restricting e-cigarette use where smoking is prohibited.¹³

Communities across Minnesota are taking action.

- The cities of Duluth, Hermantown, Ely and Mankato ban the use of e-cigarettes everywhere smoking is prohibited, including bars and restaurants. They also prohibit the sampling of e-cigarettes in retail stores and require e-cigarette sellers to get a tobacco license.
- Beltrami County includes e-cigarettes in its county indoor air law, requires e-cigarette vendors to get a tobacco license and has limits on sampling in stores.
- Hennepin County bans the use of e-cigarettes on county property.
- Housing and Redevelopment Authorities in St. Cloud, Eveleth and Worthington include e-cigarettes in their smoke-free housing policies.
- Hennepin County Technical College and Bemidji State University ban the use of e-cigarettes on their campuses.
- Rock County requires that e-cigarettes be sold from behind the counter in a locked case in retail stores and prohibits sampling.
- Target Field, Mall of America and the Minnesota Zoo prohibit e-cigarette use.

1 Kuschner, WG, Reddy, S, Mehrotra, N, Paintal, HS. Electronic cigarettes and thirdhand tobacco smoke: Two emerging health care challenges for the primary care provider. *Int J Gen Med.* 2011.

2 U.S. Food and Drug Administration, Division of Pharmaceutical Analysis. Evaluation of e-cigarettes. Sept. 2013.

3 U.S. Food and Drug Administration. FDA and Public Health Experts Warn About Electronic Cigarettes. July 2009.

4 Williams, M, Villarreal, A, Bozhilov, K, Lin, S, Talbot, P. Metal and silicate particles including nanoparticles are present in electronic cigarette cartomizer fluid and aerosol. *PLoS ONE.* Sept. 2013.

5 Goniewicz, ML, Knysak, J, Gawron, M, et al. Levels of selected carcinogens and toxicants in vapour from electronic cigarettes. *Tobacco Control.* 2013.

6 Schripp, T, Markewitz, D, Uhde, E, Salthammer, T. Does e-cigarette consumption cause passive vaping? *Indoor Air.* 2013.

7 blu eCigs. blu eCigs. www.blucigs.com. Sept. 2013.

8 FIN e-cigarettes. FIN e-cigarettes. www.fincigs.com. Sept. 2013.

9 U.S. Surgeon General. *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults.* Atlanta, GA: Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2012.

10 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Notes from the Field: Electronic Cigarette Use Among Middle and High School Students – United States, 2011–2012. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report.*

11 Babej, M. NJOY: The E-Cigarette That Aims to Snuff Out Smoking. *Forbes.* July 2013.

12 Minnesota State Legislature. Minnesota Session Laws. www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/?key=57965. Sept. 2013.

13 Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. *Minnesota E-cigarette Study* by Decision Resources, Ltd. 2014.

The FDA has the authority to regulate e-cigarettes but it has yet to take action. As a result, many businesses and localities are choosing to regulate these new products.



Businesses can:

- » Ban the use of e-cigarettes on their property.



Cities and counties can:

- » Update clean indoor air laws to prohibit use of e-cigarettes.
- » Require e-cigarette retailers to obtain a tobacco retailer license
- » Prohibit the use of e-cigarettes on city and county grounds.
- » Restrict the sale of flavored e-cigarettes to adults-only tobacco products shops.
- » Require that e-cigarettes be sold from behind the counter.
- » Prohibit the sampling of e-cigarettes in stores.



Minnesota can:

- » Update the Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act to include e-cigarettes.
- » Require e-cigarette retailers to obtain a tobacco retailer license
- » Restrict the sale of flavored e-cigarettes to adults-only tobacco products shops.
- » Require that e-cigarettes be sold from behind the counter.
- » Prohibit the sampling of e-cigarettes in stores.
- » Require disclosure of ingredients in e-cigarettes.