

Regarding CB 28-2015 and e-cigs

Glenn Schneider [sfmglennc@comcast.net] on behalf of glenn@actioncenters.net

Sent: Thursday, September 03, 2015 10:25 PM**To:** CouncilMail

Dear County Council,

Thought you might like to see this news about e-cigarettes...

Hope you had a great summer.

Glenn Schneider
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PS Thanks again for enacting CB 28!!!

From: Announcements regarding tobacco control. [mailto:STANGLANTZ-L@LISTSRV.UCSF.EDU] **On Behalf Of** Glantz, Stanton A**Sent:** Thursday, September 03, 2015 8:23 PM**To:** STANGLANTZ-L@LISTSRV.UCSF.EDU**Subject:** Calif Health Watchdog Finds High Levels of Cancer-Causing Chemicals in the Majority of Nearly 100 E-cigarettes Tested

On September 2, 2015, the [Center for Environmental Health](#) released a the largest study of the toxicity of e-cigarettes done to date. As they have done with several other consumer products, they went in to stores and bought the same e-cigarettes that consumers bought, then did laboratory testing on them. They found high levels of the cancer-causing chemicals formaldehyde and acetaldehyde, in violation of California safety standards.

The full report, *A Smoking Gun: Cancer Causing Chemicals in E-cigarettes*, is available [here](#).

They have also filed a notice to sue the e-cigarette companies under California Proposition 65. Filing that action gives California Attorney General Kamala Harris (who is running for US Senate) 60 days to take up the case on behalf of the people of California. Here is the CEH press release:

Health Watchdog Finds High Levels of Cancer-Causing Chemicals in the Majority of Nearly 100 E-cigarettes Tested*Legal action launched to hold e-cigarette makers accountable for failure to warn consumers*

Oakland, CA-The national nonprofit health watchdog [Center for Environmental Health](#) (CEH) today announced that the majority of 97 e-cigarettes and other “vaping” products tested produce high levels of the cancer-causing chemicals formaldehyde and acetaldehyde, in violation of California safety standards. The independent lab testing of products from two dozen e-cigarette makers, including RJ Reynolds (Vuse brand e-cigarettes), Imperial Tobacco/ITG Brands (blu brand), NJoy and other major companies found that 90% of the companies had at least one product that produced high levels of one or both chemicals, above the state safety limit. A test on one e-cigarette found the level of formaldehyde was more than 470 times higher than the California safety standard.

The CEH report, “*A Smoking Gun: Cancer Causing Chemicals in E-cigarettes*,” outlines the first-ever large sampling of actual e-cigarettes and vaping products tested simulating real-world use of the products, and demonstrating that the majority of e-cigarettes tested pose a serious cancer risk. CEH is initiating legal action against the companies producing the cancer-causing products for failing to warn consumers, as required under California’s strong consumer protection law known as Proposition 65. This follows CEH’s legal action earlier this year against e-cigarette makers for failing to warn consumers about risks from nicotine in e-cigarettes.

“For decades, the tobacco industry mounted a campaign of lies about cigarettes, and now these same

companies claim that their e-cigarettes are harmless. Anyone who thinks that vaping is harmless needs to know that our testing unequivocally shows that it's not safe to vape," said Michael Green, Executive Director of CEH. "This is especially troubling given the reckless marketing practices of the e-cigarette industry, which targets teens and young people, and deceives the public with unfounded health and safety claims. Our legal action aims to force the industry to comply with the law and create pressure to end their most abusive practices."

CEH purchased e-cigarettes, e-liquids, and other vaping products from major retailers including RiteAid, 7-Eleven, and from many online retailers and Bay Area vape shops between February and July 2015. The nonprofit commissioned an independent lab accredited by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation to test 97 products, including 15 disposable "cigalikes" e-cigarettes, 32 cartridge devices, and 50 refillable devices, for formaldehyde and acetaldehyde. The two chemicals are known to cause cancer and are also linked to genetic damage, birth defects, and reduced fertility. The lab used standard smoking machines that simulate how consumers use the products.

Almost ninety percent of the companies whose products were tested (21 of 24 companies) had one or more products that produced hazardous amounts of one or both of the chemicals, in violation of California law. The testing showed that 21 products produced a level of one of the chemicals at more than ten times the state safety standard, and 7 products produced one of the chemicals at more than 100 times the safety level. While some consumers believe that nicotine-free e-cigarettes are safe, the CEH testing found high levels of the chemicals even in several of these varieties. For example, one nicotine-free product produced acetaldehyde at more than 13 times the state legal safety threshold and formaldehyde at more than 74 times the threshold. In all, the majority of the products tested (50 of the 97 products) showed high levels of one or both of the cancer-causing chemicals, in excess of the California standards.

The e-cigarette industry heavily markets their products as safe, even claiming that e-cigarettes produce nothing more than "harmless water vapor." A 2014 study of e-cigarette websites found companies market the products as healthier (60% of brands) and cleaner (95% of websites) than traditional cigarettes, and make unsubstantiated claims that the products do not produce secondhand smoke (76%) and can be used where smoking is banned or restricted. The study also found ads featuring doctors approving of e-cigarettes (22%). The industry also claims e-cigarettes are safe smoking cessation devices, but experts say e-cigarettes are more likely a gateway to traditional tobacco: a recent study of high schoolers who used e-cigarettes found that they are almost twice as likely as non-users to start smoking traditional cigarettes.

The e-cigarette industry aggressively markets its products to teens and young people, yet the CEH testing exposing the prevalence of cancer-causing chemicals in e-cigarettes means that teen e-cigarette users are not only being exposed to the addictive, brain-altering chemical nicotine but also to what could end up being a lifetime of exposure to potent carcinogens. E-cigarette use is particularly problematic for pregnant teens and young women, since exposure to nicotine and other chemicals during pregnancy can contribute to small babies, premature birth, and stillbirth.

Many of the products CEH purchased were made with bright colors and/or candy or dessert flavors. Nicotine is especially dangerous for young children: A teaspoon of a typical e-liquid contains enough nicotine to be lethal to an adult; smaller amounts would be lethal to a child. Already one death has been attributed to a child accidentally swallowing e-liquid. Nationwide, the number of cases of child poisoning linked to e-liquids jumped to 1,543 in 2013, and almost 4,000 in 2014.

"Parents should know about the dangers of e-cigarettes and young people should be wary of the industry's deceptive marketing," said Green. "We must not stand by while the tobacco industry preys on a new generation of victims. Consumers need to know that the smoke from e-cigarettes is far from harmless vapor, but is in fact a cancer-causing cocktail of toxic chemicals."

The Center for Environmental Health has a nearly 20-year track record of protecting children and families from harmful chemicals in our air, water, food and in dozens of every day products. CEH also works with major industries and leaders in green business to promote healthier alternatives to toxic products and practices. In 2010, the San Francisco Business Times bestowed its annual "Green Champion" award to CEH for its work to improve health and the environment in the Bay Area and beyond.