

Notice of State Administration for Market Regulation and State Tobacco Monopoly Administration on Prohibition of Selling Electronic Cigarettes to Minors

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Some media entities recently reported stationary stores near primary and secondary schools in some areas sell electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) to students. Certain e-commerce platforms wholesale and/or retail "student e-cigarettes". To implement the intent of important instructions made by the State Council leaders, and protect minors from harm of e-cigarettes, we hereby issue a notice on some relevant matters as follows:

I. Smoking of e-cigarettes poses major health and safety risks to minors

China has so far not enacted any national standard on e-cigarettes. The various types of e-cigarettes available in the market range widely in choice of raw materials, use of additives, product design and quality control, resulting in varied quality of e-cigarette products, and some products may contain quality and safety hazards such as e-liquid leakage, poor battery, and unsafe added ingredients. Furthermore, the core ingredient of most e-cigarettes used for consumption is purified nicotine, which is a lethal chemical. Since the respiratory system of minors is not fully developed, inhaling such vaporized substance causes negative effects to their lung functions, and misuse may even lead to many safety risks such as nicotine intoxication.

II. Market players are forbidden to sell e-cigarettes to minors

The Framework Convention on Tobacco Control approved and issued by the World Health Organization, signed and joined by China in 2006, stipulates "prohibiting the manufacture and sale of sweets, snacks, toys or any other objects in the form of tobacco products which appeal to minors". The Law on Protection of Minors stipulates "It is prohibited to sell cigarette or liquor to minors". E-cigarette, as a supplement to conventional tobacco products such as the cigarette, has large safety and health risks in itself. To strengthen protection in the society for the physical and mental health of minors, no market player shall be allowed to sell e-cigarette to minors. We advise e-commerce platforms remove e-cigarettes marked with descriptors such as "student" or "minor" from display online, deduct merit points or force closure of such online stores (sellers); strengthen review of names of e-cigarette products put on display online, take effective measures to block associated keywords, and refrain from displaying e-cigarette products to minors.

III. The whole society joins hands to protect minors from harm of e-cigarettes

Market regulation agency and tobacco monopoly administration at various levels should further strengthen market regulation of e-cigarettes, combine with the special campaign of comprehensive rectification of environment near schools to urge various market players to stop selling e-cigarette to minors, and promptly investigate and penalize various offenses such as manufacturing and selling e-cigarettes that have no manufacturing date, quality pass certificate or manufacturer's name, according to law. Schools and families should strengthen education and protection of minors by stressing harm of e-cigarettes to health. Media entities should increase coverage on harm to health from smoking cigarettes among minors, including e-cigarettes. All organizations and individuals should take actions to dissuade and stop selling e-cigarettes to minors. Let us work together to create a positive social environment for the healthy development of minors!

Please pay attention to this notice.

Source: STMA website, http://www.tobacco.gov.cn/html/49/86870396_n.html