



Filtered Tobacco Products

City Council
April 10, 2025



Regional Policy Efforts



May 2023

Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors formed the Tobacco Waste Ad Hoc Subcommittee to develop consistent regional policy

Capitola Representation

Council Member Pedersen participated on Subcommittee; requested agenda item to consider of adopting an ordinance



Capitola Regulations



Municipal Code Chapter 8.38

Prohibits smoking in enclosed indoor public places and specific outdoor public places, such as Capitola Beach, the Esplanade, and designated parks, among others.

Municipal Code Chapter 5.38

Prohibits the sale of flavored tobacco products by tobacco retailers.

Resolution No. 4339

Adopted October 12, 2023. Identifies tobacco waste as a threat to public health and the environment.

SC Board Bans Sale of Filtered Tobacco Products



County Ordinance No. 5461

Adopted October 29, 2024. Prohibits sale of filtered tobacco products in unincorporated areas of the County.

Enforcement begins on January 1, 2027, or on a date that at least two additional jurisdictions in the County approve a similar ordinance, whichever occurs later.



Commission on the Environment



March 19, 2025 COE Meeting

Capitola COE received a presentation from the Public Health Division of the Santa Cruz Health Services Agency.



COE unanimously voted to recommend that Capitola City Council adopt a similar ordinance, prohibiting the sale of filtered tobacco products within the City of Capitola.

Guest Speakers



Tara Leonard, MPH
Senior Health Educator
Tobacco Education and Prevention
Public Health Division
Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency



Health Services Agency Public Health Division



Tobacco Product Waste: A Public Health and Environmental Threat

Tara Leonard, MPH

Project Director, Tobacco Education and Prevention

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The most littered item on the planet

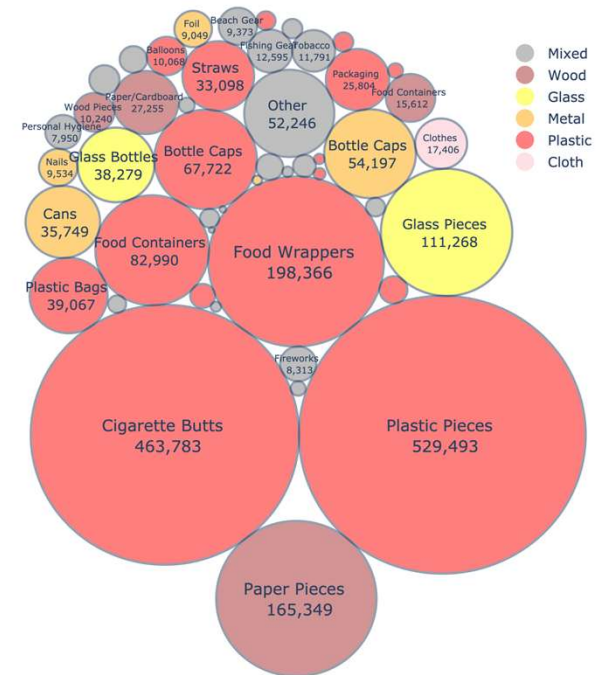


4.5 trillion cigarette butts worldwide

4,500,000,000,000

And on local beaches and riverways

In ten years, Save Our Shores volunteers have collected almost half a million cigarette butts during local cleanup events.



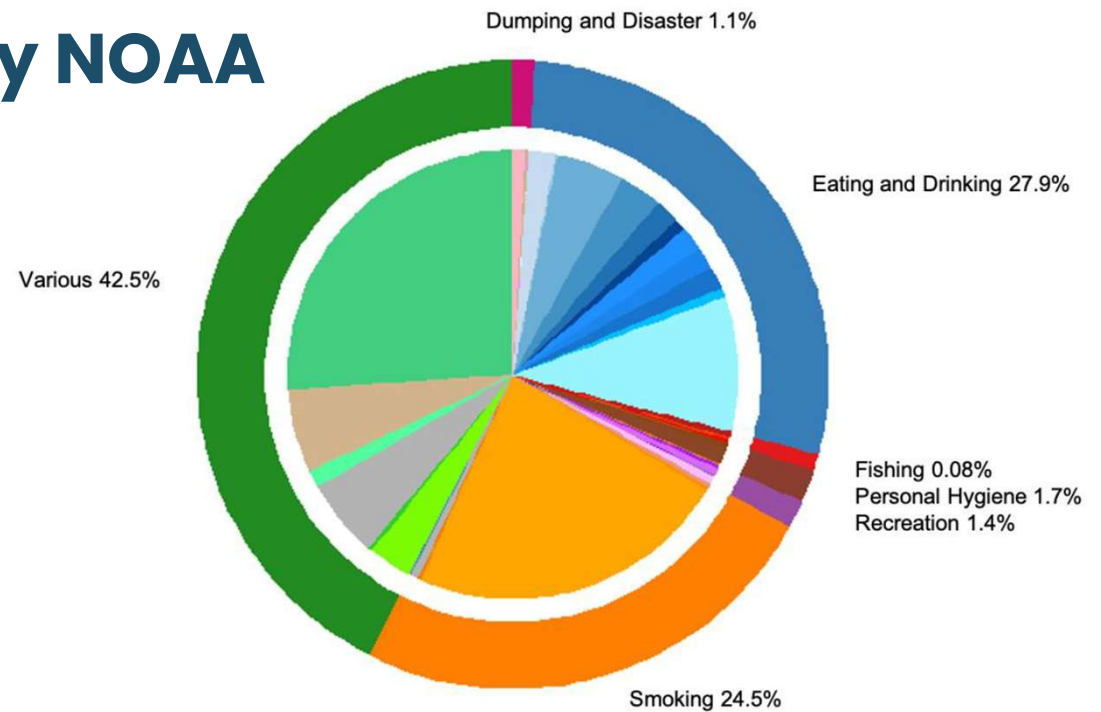
Capitola beach cleanups

Since 2023, Save Our Shores has conducted quarterly cleanup events at Capitola Beach. Cigarettes butts are among the top five items collected.

Item	8/19/23	11/12/23	3/16/24	5/11/24	8/24/24	9/21/24	11/9/24	1/18/25	3/15/25	TOTALS
Plastic Pieces	122	316	228	246	315	59	393	317	329	2325
Paper Pieces	67	550	177	155	149	0	447	214	94	1853
Plastic Food Wrappers	52	180	137	177	96	68	163	117	286	1276
Polystyrene Pieces	21	270	43	88	44	88	43	159	341	1097
Cigarette Butts	18	224	28	160	78	19	219	87	113	946

Data supported by NOAA research

24.5% of all litter collected on the shores of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary between 2017 and 2021 was attributed to smoking.



Marine debris on the shoreline of Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary: An assessment of activities contributing to marine debris, categories and composition, spatial distribution, and predictor variables, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 2023

Remnants of a deadly, addictive product

Deaths in California from Smoking	
Adults who die each year from their own smoking	40,000
Kids now under 18 and alive in California who will ultimately die prematurely from smoking	441,000

Smoking kills more people than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined — and thousands more die from other tobacco-related causes — such as fires caused by smoking (more than 1,000 deaths/year nationwide) and smokeless tobacco use.

Tobacco products kill 500,000 people in the United States every year, including 40,000 Californians.

<https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/problem/toll-us/california>

Filters are microfiber pollution

One cigarette butt contains over 12,000 microfibers comprised of cellulose acetate with a suite of chemical additives and “plasticizers.”

Cigarette filters release about 0.3 million tons of microfibers into the aquatic environment per year.



NOAA Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee (IMDCC). (2024). Report on Microfiber Pollution. 149 pp.
<https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/interagency-marine-debris-coordinating-committee-reports/report-microfiber-pollution>

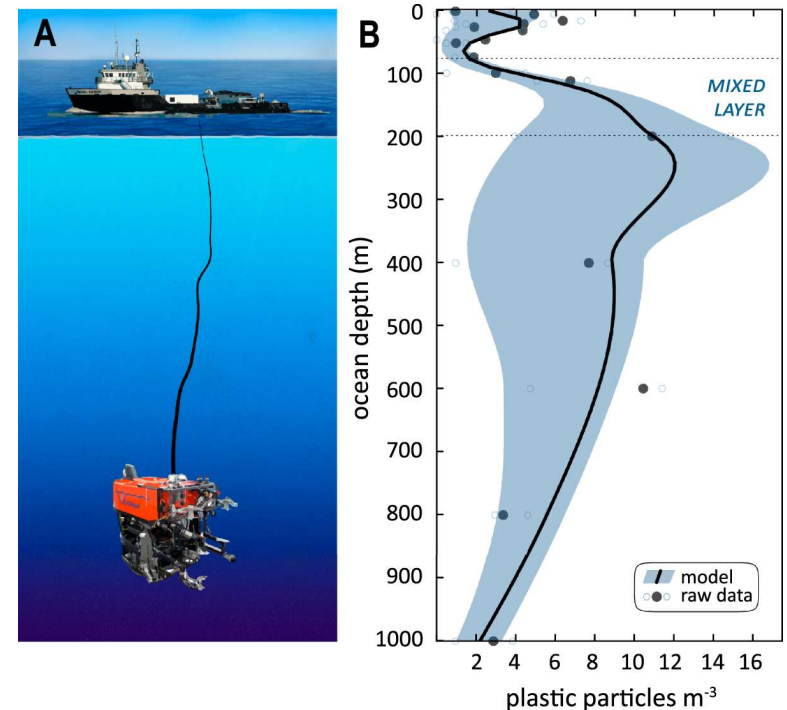
Found throughout the water column

Cigarette butt microfibers break down into microplastics. According to MBARI, microplastics are now found in all layers of the Monterey Bay water column.

Microplastics are present in the seafood we eat, with potential risks to human health.

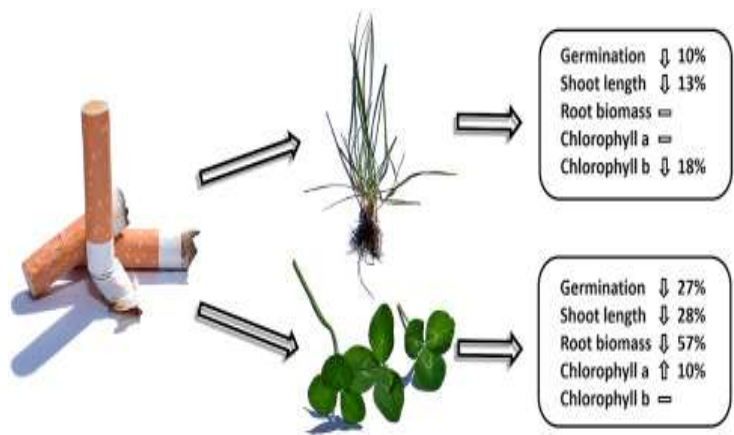
“Ingestion of food and water contaminated with microplastics is the main route of human exposure.”

Alberghini L, Truant A, Santonicola S, Colavita G, Giaccone V. Microplastics in Fish and Fishery Products and Risks for Human Health: A Review. *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2022 Dec 31;20(1):789. doi: 10.3390/ijerph20010789. PMID: 36613111; PMCID: PMC9819327.



MBARI The vertical distribution and biological transport of marine microplastics across the epipelagic and mesopelagic water column, *Scientific Reports*, 9, 7843,

Toxic to plants, animals and marine life



Green et al., "Cigarette butts have adverse effects on initial growth of perennial ryegrass and white clover," Ecotoxicology and Environmental Safety, 2019

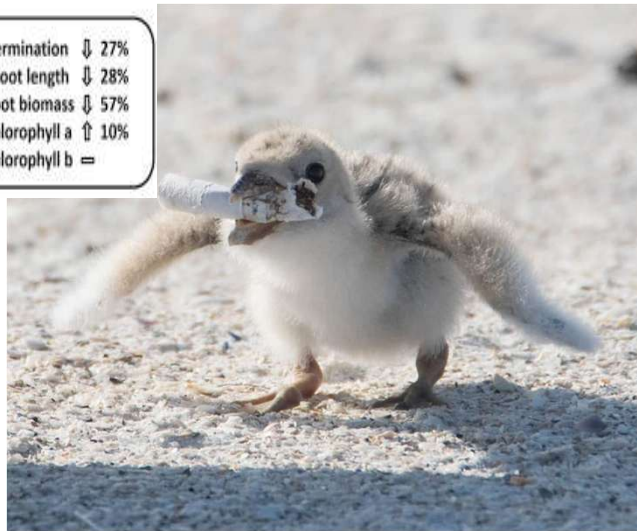


photo credit: Karen Mason



Slaughter et al: Toxicity of Cigarette Butts and their Chemical Components to Marine and Freshwater Fish, 2011

Global impacts across the supply chain

One cigarette:

- Water footprint of 3.7 liters
- Fossil fuel depletion of 3.5g of oil
- Climate change impact of 14g of CO₂ emissions

Six trillion cigarettes are produced annually.

According to WHO, “Tobacco companies are a top global plastic polluter whose production and manufacturing directly contribute to climate change and deforestation.”

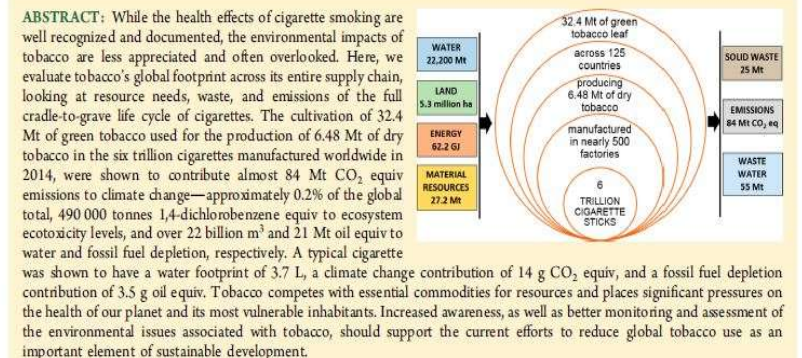
Cigarette Smoking: An Assessment of Tobacco's Global Environmental Footprint Across Its Entire Supply Chain

Maria Zafeiridou,[†] Nicholas S Hopkinson,[‡] and Nikolaos Voulvoulis^{*,†}

[†] Centre for Environmental Policy, Imperial College London, London, SW7 1NA, England

[‡] National Heart and Lung Institute, Royal Brompton Hospital Campus, Fulham Road, London SW3 6NP, England

Supporting Information



World Health Organization. Tobacco and its environmental impact: an overview. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2017

Filters don't even work

According to the World Health Organization cigarette filters have “no benefit in preventing the adverse health effects of smoking.”

According to a 1958 internal memo, Philip Morris scientists recognized that “selective filtration of harmful compounds in cigarette smoke was...a thermodynamic impossibility.”



Tobacco Product Waste in California: A White Paper.
California Department of Public Health, February, 2022.

O'Keefe AE. Selective filtration. September 16, 1958. Philip Morris records; Master Settlement Agreement. Available: <https://www.industrydocuments.ucsf.edu/docs/hhpb0122>

Big Tobacco takes no responsibility



The tobacco industry externalizes their costs, forcing the physical and financial burden of tobacco waste onto government agencies and volunteer organizations.

Significant financial burden

The Center for Tobacco and the Environment at San Diego State University has created a model that communities can use with local data to estimate how much tobacco waste costs their area.

Example: Proportional Estimation, California Cities

Large California Cities (2020 IJERPH paper)

- Proportional estimation approach using commonly available data from largest U.S. cities
- Estimate cost of TPW based fixed 25% parameter
- LA: **\$19,703,611**
- San Diego: **\$7,066,021**
- San Jose: **\$3,908,981**
- San Fran: **\$4,195,867**

Santa Cruz

- Santa Cruz provided data on costs of all litter mitigation
- Estimate cost of TPW based fixed 25.3% parameter (average of 3 studies)
- Result: **\$2,067,654**

<https://cte-dev.sdsu.edu/tobacco-product-waste-economic-model/>

Current efforts rely on “downstream” solutions

- Garbage cans
- No smoking signs
- Education campaigns
- Litter enforcement

Focus on
Individual
Behavior
Change

Instead of
Policy and
Systems
Change



Current Capitola tobacco ordinances

8.38 Smoking Regulations

Where smoking is prohibited in indoor and outdoor public places.

Smoking is prohibited in specifically delineated outdoor public spaces including:

- Capitola Beach
- Any portion of the Esplanade right-of-way
- Capitola Wharf
- Many other outdoor locations including specific roads, parks, and properties

5.38 Tobacco Retail License

Where, how, and which tobacco products can be sold.

- Retail application process
- Product definitions
- **Limitations on products sold**
- Fees and penalties
- Enforcement

TPW education started in 2017



Cleanups across the county



Tobacco Waste Cleanup Instructions

Row #1: Record butts as you pick them up using hash marks. At the end of the row, write a subtotal.

Example:

1. Cigarette Butts	Subtotal
	23

Row #2-4: Record tobacco butts within 10 feet of No Smoking signs or storm drains. Each butt is counted ONCE. Subtotal as a

Row #5: Before you turn in the the Subtotal in Row #1-4 to TOTAL # of Butts in Row #5.

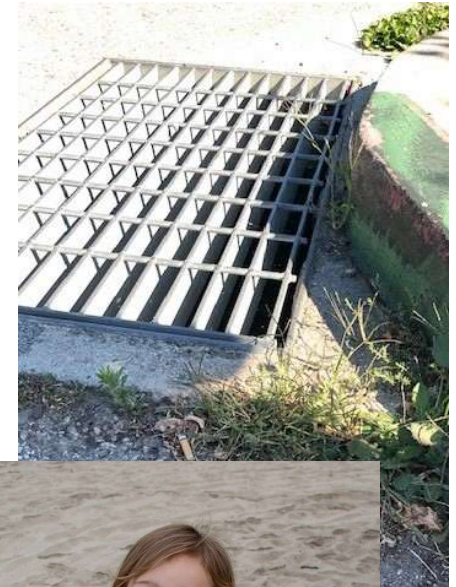
Row #6: Record other butt waste, such as e-cigs, packs

Thank you!

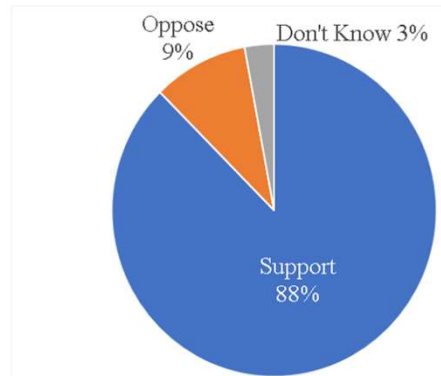
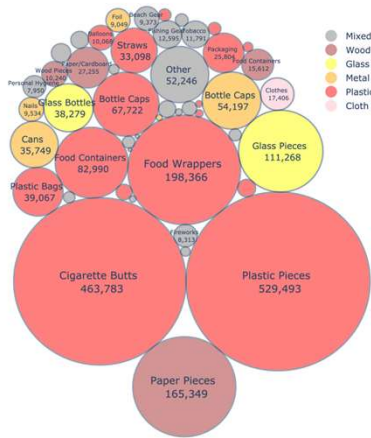
Tobacco Waste Data Collection Form

Location	Date/Day of week	Start Time	Name of Collector
1. Cigarette, Cigar and Cigarillo (packaged)			
2. Butts found within 10 feet of a Cigarette Can or Signage			
3. Butts found within 10 feet of a Storm Drain			
4. Other tobacco waste in cigarette packs			
5. Add Subtotal from Rows 1-4 to get the TOTAL # of Butts			
6. Other tobacco waste in cigarette packs			

Comments: Please add anything that affected the amount of tobacco litter collected (e.g., weather, time of day, etc.)



A data- and science-driven approach



Tobacco Control

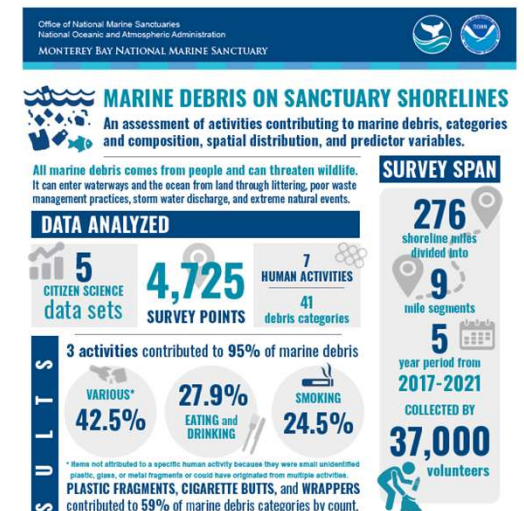
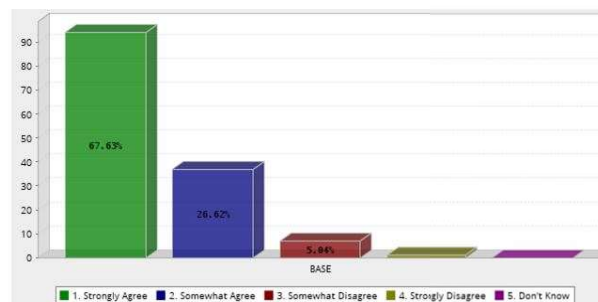
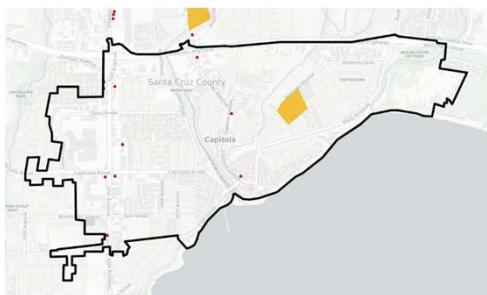
Visit this Journal **BMJ**

► Tob Control. 2002 Mar;11(Suppl 1):i40-i50. doi: [10.1136/tc.11.suppl_1.i40](https://doi.org/10.1136/tc.11.suppl_1.i40)

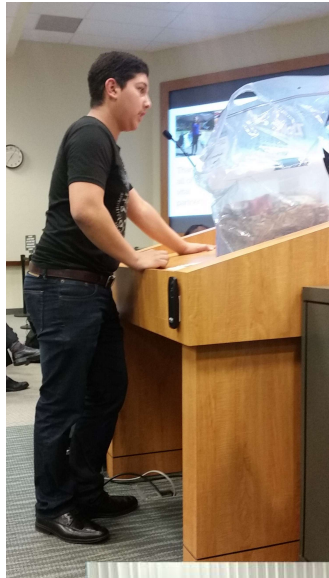
Cigarette filter ventilation is a defective design because of misleading taste, bigger puffs, and blocked vents

[L Kozłowski](#), [R O'Connor](#)

Q2. Cigarette butts and other tobacco litter are a problem in your community.



Public policy meetings early and often



Tobacco product waste (TPW) resolutions

By 2024 all five county jurisdictions passed resolutions recognizing tobacco waste as a public health and environmental threat:

- City of Santa Cruz, 2021
- City of Watsonville, 2021
- County of Santa Cruz, 2023
- City of Capitola, 2023
- City of Scotts Valley, 2024



The Board of Supervisors' resolution



- Passed on May 16, 2023 the BOS resolution:
1. Created a TPW ad hoc committee to study policy options
 2. Specified a deadline of **January 2025** for returning to the Board with a policy recommendation
 3. Committed to contacting the other four jurisdictions urging collaborative action

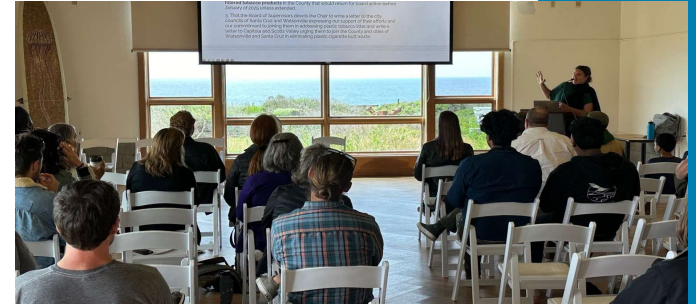


Serving the Community | Working for the Future

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

Ad hoc committee 5/23 to 10/24

- Engaged community leaders, non-profit partners, youth, environmental advocates, and members of the public
- Held education and outreach events including a meeting with County tobacco retailers
- Assessed the latest data on tobacco waste and its environmental and health impacts
- Evaluated a variety of policy approaches
- Worked with County Counsel to develop policy language



Policy evaluation process

Policy Options

- Prohibit the sale of all tobacco products
- Prohibit the sale of single-use tobacco products
- Prohibit the sale of cigarettes and cigars with an embedded single-use filter
- Prohibit the sale of electronic smoking devices (e-cigs)
- Prohibit the sale of single-use e-cigs
- Prohibit the sale of other plastic tobacco products (lighters, packaging)
- Require hazardous waste tracking and handling
- Retailer density restrictions
- TPW mitigation fees
- Deposit/return programs (EPR)

Evaluation Criteria

- Impact on litter reduction
- Ability to enforce
- Public support
- Impact on tobacco retailers
- Impact on jurisdiction
- Impact on current tobacco users
- Likelihood of tobacco industry pushback
- Legal precedence
- Impact on public health
- Focus of responsibility
- Others

The County's product definition language

Partially Inconsumable Cigarette/Cigar

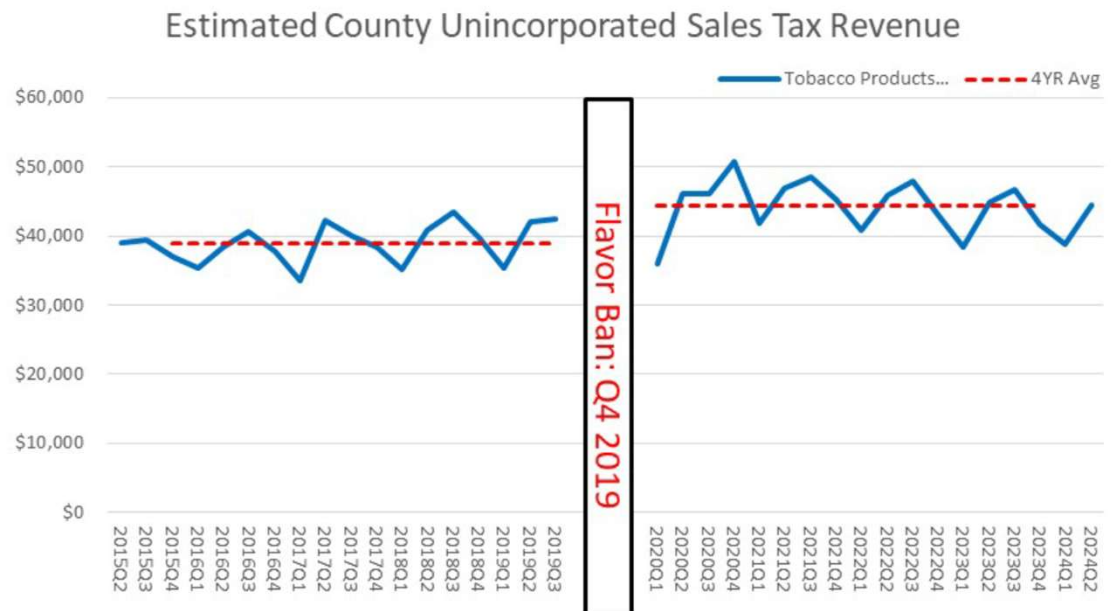
Any cigarette/cigar containing an embedded component or part commonly referred to or marketed as a filter that is not intended to be consumed, whether it is made of any material including, but not limited to, plastic, cellulose acetate, other fibrous plastic material, or any other inorganic, organic, or biodegradable material.

- Only embedded filters
- Broad filter material language limits an unreliable industry's ability to skirt regulation

Impact on County sales tax revenue

According to the County Administrative Office, the 2019 flavored tobacco sales ban led to a 3.1% decline in sales tax revenue over the initial six months, followed by double-digit increases as consumer behavior adjusted.

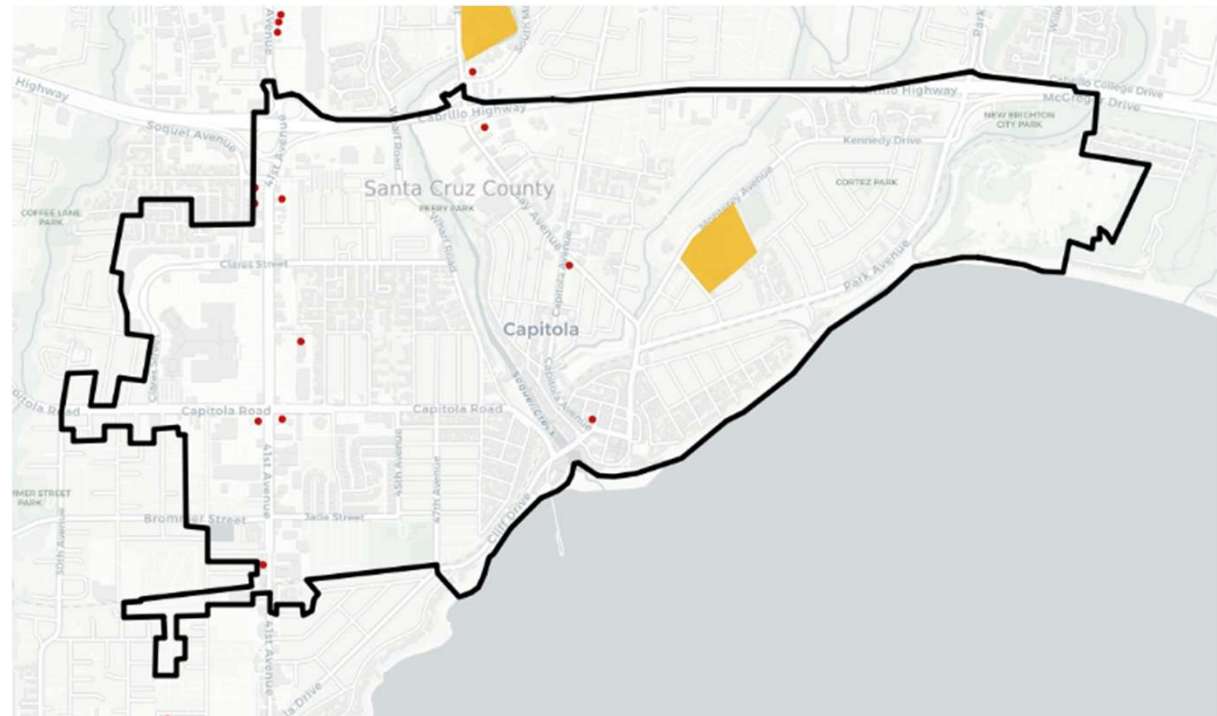
The County has 76 tobacco retailers.



Capitola tobacco retailers

Capitola has ten tobacco retailers.

- Beverages and More
- Capitola Coast
- Verutti Liquors
- Grady's Market
- Capitola Shell
- Capitola Union 76
- AJ's Fuel
- 41st Liquor & Market
- Quality Market & Liquor
- Chevron



Cigarette use is trending down

According to the 2022 California Health Interview Survey, 6% of adults use cigarettes.

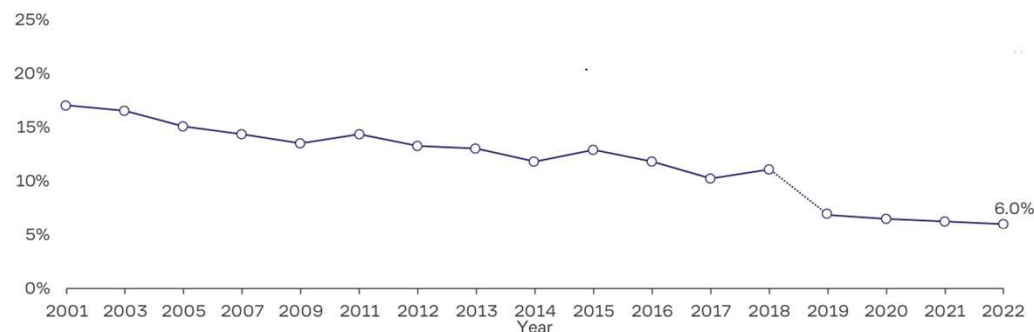
According to the 2024 California Youth Tobacco Survey 1.3% of high school students report using cigarettes in the last 30 days.

Tobacco Product Use

Adult Tobacco Product Use

Fewer adults are smoking cigarettes than ever before. In 2022, 6.0% (1.8 million) of California adults reported current cigarette smoking. Current tobacco use in this report is the use of any tobacco product in the past 30 days.

Figure 1. Current cigarette smoking among adults aged ≥18 years—California Health Interview Survey, 2001 to 2022



The dotted lines indicate a break in trend due to a methodology change. Prior to 2019, the survey was administered via computer-assisted telephone interview. Since 2019, the survey was administered via computer-assisted web interview and computer-assisted telephone interview. This methodology change significantly impacted cigarette smoking rates. Current vape use was first collected of all adults in 2017. See [Additional Notes](#) section for more information.

Source: California Health Interview Survey. CHIS 2001 to CHIS 2022 Adult Files. Los Angeles, CA: UCLA Center for Health Policy Research; October 2023.

Won't smokers get these products online?

NO. Assembly Bill 3218 went into effect on January 1, 2025.

Any provisions in a local tobacco retail licensing ordinance will automatically apply with equal force to online and delivery sales.



Broad community support

- Breathe California
- The Cigarette Surfboard
- Fishwise
- Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation & Advisory Council
- Ocean Conservancy
- Pajaro Valley Prevention and Student Assistance
- Santa Cruz County Tobacco Education Coalition
- Save Our Shores
- Save the Waves
- Surfrider
- Trash Talkers
- And many more...



MONTEREY BAY NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY



THE CIGARETTE SURFBOARD



Policy success!

On October 8, 2024, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to ban the sale of filtered tobacco products.



“Enforcement...shall begin on January 1, 2027 or on a date that two additional jurisdictions in the County approve a similar ordinance, whichever date is later.”

The City of Santa Cruz

The City of Santa Cruz is approaching this issue through its Health in All Policies (HiAP) subcommittee. In April, they will host a tobacco retailers' meeting. The item is tentatively agendized for the full council on June 10.





Staff Recommendation

Provide direction to staff on whether to prepare a draft ordinance on the prohibition on the sale of filtered tobacco products for City Council consideration.



Questions?

Thank You

