

TOBACCO

Got an ID?

Prevent tobacco sales to minors!

Tobacco sales to minors is a criminal offense.

Minnesota law prohibits the sale of tobacco and tobacco devices (rolling papers, pipes, etc.) to anyone under the age of 18. Performing unannounced Compliance Checks at all businesses licensed to sell tobacco products is one important way officers in Rice County enforce this law.

What are tobacco compliance checks?

Yearly tobacco compliance checks are required by the State of Minnesota for all businesses licensed to sell tobacco products. A compliance check is an unannounced visit by police or Sheriff's department officers. The officers bring with them a person under age 18 who attempts to purchase tobacco. If the underage buyer is asked for a valid ID and then denied the purchase due to age, the business and employee have successfully passed their compliance check. If the minor is not asked for an ID and is sold tobacco products, both the business and the employee will be charged and ordered to pay a monetary fine.

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Why is this important?

There are many problems and risks facing youth who use tobacco. Some include:

- **Addiction.** Those who begin smoking at an early age develop a more severe nicotine dependence than those who start in adulthood.
- **Exposure to other harmful substances.** Early tobacco use has been linked to other risky behaviors, such as alcohol and other drug use.
- **Health problems.** Cigarette smoking harms the rapid growth that occurs during adolescent, affecting the brain and body's ability to perform.

What can I do?

- **Be prepared.** Calculate the date of birth that must appear on an ID before you can sell tobacco. Post the date on your cash register.
- **Always ask for an ID.** If the one produced looks questionable, ask to see another ID.
- **Don't give in.** If the customer complains or persists, offer to have them speak to your manager.

How do I find out more?

If you or your supervisor would like to learn more about compliance checks and laws regulating tobacco sales to minors, call your local law enforcement agency. Ask to speak to an officer who works with compliance checks.

- Northfield Police- 507-645-4475
- Faribault Police- 507-334-4305
- Rice County Sheriff- 507-334-4391

To receive an employee training kit, call the MN Department of Health (Tobacco Prevention and Control Section) at 651-215-8952. Ask for the "How to Stop Youth Access to Tobacco" education materials.

This information is brought to you by the
Rice County Chemical Health Coalition
507-333-6813 • www.ricecountychc.com

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