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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **New Survey Finds Tobacco Products Easily Available, Accessible to Youth in San Joaquin County**

### ***The First and Largest Survey of its Kind in California Analyzing Tobacco, Alcohol and Food in Stores***

STOCKTON, CA ( March 5, 2014) – New data reveal that San Joaquin County (SJC) has more stores selling candy, mint and liquor flavored tobacco products compared to the state average, and has the lowest cigarette prices in the state. These striking findings are part of data released today on the availability and marketing of tobacco, alcohol and food products (unhealthy and healthy) in stores that sell tobacco. This is the first time all three categories of products have been analyzed together.

Today's data release also marks the launch of *Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community (HSHC)*, a statewide campaign formed by tobacco prevention, alcohol prevention and nutrition partners working in collaboration to improve the health of Californians by informing them about the impact of unhealthy product marketing in the retail environment.

Health advocates up and down the state released the survey results today, at 13 press events taking place simultaneously throughout California. More than 7,300 retail stores were surveyed in the 58 counties of California (120 in San Joaquin County), including convenience, supermarket, liquor, tobacco, small market, discount, drug and big-box stores. The primary goal was to shed light on what products are available and promoted in our communities. Nearly 700 public health representatives, community volunteers and youth participated in the statewide survey, which was conducted from July through October 2013.

State, regional and county level data were included in the survey to provide insight on: the density of stores selling tobacco and their proximity to schools; types of tobacco and alcohol products being sold; advertising and placement of such products in stores; the availability of e-cigarettes; and the availability and promotion of unhealthy and healthy food options including low or non-fat milk and fresh fruits and vegetables.

Research shows that youth are highly influenced by the marketing of unhealthy products like tobacco and alcohol, even more so than by peer pressure. "We have made great strides in tobacco control in recent years but, as the survey results show, the tobacco industry and other companies offering unhealthy items continue to find new products to entice our youth, like alcopops and flavored cigars, which are the same price as a pack of gum. They are being marketed throughout our county, often in stores just a few blocks from schools," said William Mitchell, Director of San Joaquin County Public Health Services. "It

-more-

is important to be aware of how the places we live and the resources that are available to us are influencing our health outcomes. In a community with limited resources, our staff and partners are committed to collaborating with retailers, community organizations and parents throughout the county to protect our youth and make our communities healthier.”

Survey results also show that in SJC, over 82% of stores have advertising for unhealthy products on the outside of stores, while only 9% have advertising for healthy items, such as milk or fruit and vegetables. SJC fared better in the number of stores accepting Cal Fresh and WIC—almost 66% compared to 53% statewide.

“We still have more work to do when it comes to reducing the prevalence of obesity and other chronic diseases in our communities, and it’s important to remember we’re in this together,” stressed Barb Alberson, Sr. Deputy Director of Policy and Planning at SJC Public Health Services. Through community outreach and education, Public Health Services staff from the Tobacco and Nutrition programs plan to work together to support retailers in providing healthier options in their stores. Current activities include food demonstrations, nutrition education, and youth engagement. Alberson added, “By providing the necessary tools, information and support, minor modifications could be made to the retail environment, and Public Health Services staff, its partner organizations, and local retailers have the potential to make a large impact on the health of SJC residents.”

For state, regional and county specific data and more information on *Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community*, visit [www.HealthyStoresHealthyCommunity.com](http://www.HealthyStoresHealthyCommunity.com).

# # #

**Attachments:**

San Joaquin County Data Sheet

Regional Data Sheet

Map - Density Youth and Stores that Sell Tobacco in SJC

PowerPoint slides with 3 Images reflecting local findings



## The Situation

### Stores in our communities play a critical role in our health.

They not only impact the economic well-being of neighborhoods, but also the physical health of the people who visit them. The types of products available, many of which contribute to chronic health issues, and how they're promoted influence us all, but especially our kids.

In 2011, the tobacco industry spent \$605 million<sup>1</sup> advertising and promoting tobacco products in California and our kids are paying the price. Exposure to tobacco marketing in stores increases tobacco experimentation and use by youth<sup>2</sup> and is more powerful than peer pressure.<sup>3</sup>

Marketing of unhealthy foods also has a great impact, particularly on kids. They consume more of it, more often because it's promoted heavily to them - \$1 million an hour is spent by

companies selling soda, candy, chips and other unhealthy foods.<sup>4</sup> Low-income communities also have less access to fresh, affordable and nutritious food furthering the problem.<sup>5</sup> Underage drinking also increases when youth are exposed to alcohol ads.<sup>6</sup> In fact, 1 in 5 California high school students drink 5 or more alcoholic drinks in a row per month.<sup>7</sup>



## The Campaign

The **Healthy Stores for a Healthy Community** campaign is a statewide collaboration between tobacco use prevention, nutrition and alcohol prevention partners. The goal is to improve the health of Californians through changes in community stores and to educate people how in-store product marketing influences consumption of unhealthy products. Working together, we can make our community a healthier place and maintain a vibrant business community.

## The Survey

Scientific surveys were recently conducted throughout California to assess product marketing and the availability of healthy and unhealthy options offered in stores that sell tobacco - **the first time** in California that tobacco, alcohol and food were analyzed together in stores. This is valuable information to help make the places we shop healthier.

More than 7,000 stores were surveyed in all 58 counties, which included convenience, supermarket, liquor, tobacco, small market, discount, drug and big-box stores. Approximately 700 individuals participated in gathering information statewide, including representatives from public health, community volunteers and youth.

### WHAT WE KNOW...

	SAN JOAQUIN	CA
% of adults who smoke (2011-12)	14.6%	13.8%
% of youth who smoke (2012, grades 9-12)	10.3%	10.5%
Cost of smoking (2012)	\$120,104,526	\$6.5B
% of adults who are overweight or obese (2011-12)	68.6%	59.8%
% of adults who ate 3+ fruits and vegetables yesterday (2011-12)	23.5%	27.2%
% of youth who used alcohol in the past 30 days (2009-11, 11th grade)	40%	35%
% of youth who binge drink (2009-11, 11th grade)	23%	22%

For sources, please see website

**FACT: CHRONIC DISEASES**  
Obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and tobacco-related diseases account for more than **80% of all deaths** in California. These deaths could be prevented by eliminating tobacco use, limiting alcohol intake, eating healthy and being physically active.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT STORES THAT SELL TOBACCO (2012)

	SAN JOAQUIN	CA
Stores that sell tobacco products	654	36,777
% of stores near schools**	20.9%	27.4%
% of stores in low income areas (185% of federal poverty level)	57%	46.5%
Number of youth for every 1 store	307	251
Number of adult smokers for every 1 store	107	101

SURVEY RESULTS OF STORES THAT SELL TOBACCO (2013)

	SAN JOAQUIN	CA
<b>GENERAL</b>		
Number of stores surveyed	120	7,393
% of stores that have <u>unhealthy</u> exterior advertising	82.5%	71%
% of stores that have <u>healthy</u> exterior advertising	9.2%	12.2%
<b>TOBACCO</b>		
<b>% OF STORES THAT SELL...</b>		
Lowest price of cigarettes	\$3.77	\$4.30
e-cigarettes	45.8%	45.7%
candy, mint and liquor flavored non-cigarette tobacco products	90.8%	79.4%
candy, mint and liquor flavored non-cigarette tobacco products and <u>are near schools</u> **	80%	75.3%
candy, mint and liquor flavored non-cigarette tobacco products vs. alcopops	90.8%/92.6%	79.4%/82.4%
candy, mint and liquor flavored non-cigarette tobacco products vs. milk	90.8%/20%	79.4%/37.2%
chewing tobacco	62.5%	56.1%
little cigars and cigarillos	87.5%	83.7%
the most popular brand of cigarillos for under \$1	89.4%	78.1%
tobacco products near candy at the check-out	50.8%	39.1%
tobacco products near candy at the check-out <u>and are near schools</u> **	48%	40.5%
<b>FOOD</b>		
<b>% OF STORES THAT SELL...</b>		
low- or non-fat milk	20.2%	37.2%
sugary drinks at the check-out	51.7%	56.9%
sugary drinks at the check-out <u>and are near schools</u> **	32%	55.6%
<u>any</u> fresh fruit or vegetable	28.3%	42.4%
a good selection of <u>good quality</u> fresh fruits and vegetables	19.4%	33.2%
a good selection of <u>good quality</u> fresh fruits and vegetables in low income vs. <u>not</u> low income areas	16%/*	30.3%/36%
<b>% OF STORES...</b>		
that accept CalFresh that sell a good selection of <u>good quality</u> fresh fruits and vegetables	*	41%
that accept CalFresh or WIC	65.8%	53.7%
<b>ALCOHOL</b>		
<b>OF STORES THAT SELL ALCOHOL, %...</b>		
overall % of stores that sell alcohol	76.7%	71.3%
that sell alcopops	92.6%	82.4%
with alcohol ads near candy/toys or below 3 feet	48.1%	36.7%
that sell malt liquor in low income vs. <u>not</u> low income areas	95.2%/73.7%	81.6%/71.4%
with alcohol exterior advertising	73.9%	54.3%

\* = no information available    \*\* = within 1,000 feet    Reference the technical report for confidence intervals