

Limiting Where Cigarettes May Be Sold Has Great Potential to Reduce Tobacco Use in Minnesota

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the world.¹ At least 380,000 stores in the U.S. sell tobacco products.^{2,3} The density of retailers selling tobacco within a community has a direct impact on kids starting smoking and adults' difficulty in quitting.^{4,5,6,7} In addition, menthol cigarettes are directly tied to youth and adult use as well as disparities in tobacco use among priority populations in Minnesota.^{8,9}

The Tobacco Town Minnesota (TTMN) project is a collaboration between researchers at the Brookings Institution, the Public Health Law Center, and Washington University, funded by a research grant from ClearWaySM Minnesota (RC-2017-0010). The research team used computer

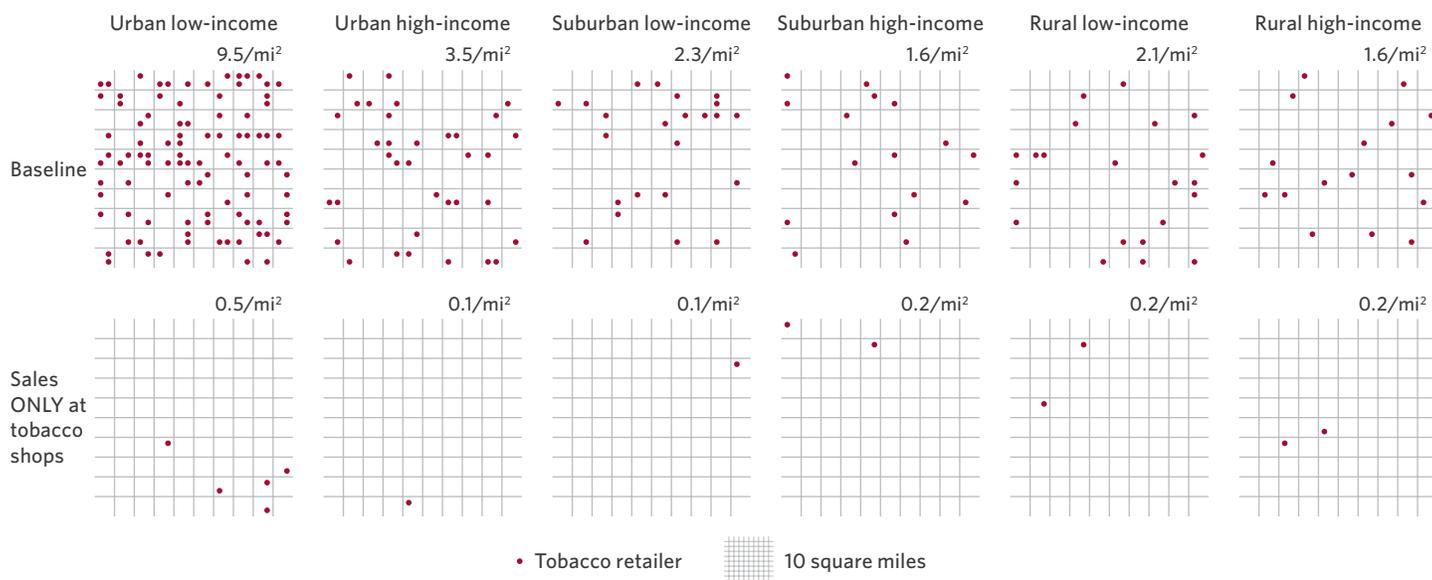
simulations to examine the impact of cigarette sales restrictions in six types of communities in Minnesota.

Four types of policies were tested alone and in combination with each other:

- Restricting the sale of menthol cigarettes;
- Limiting the types of stores in which cigarettes can be sold;
- Limiting how close tobacco retailers can be to each other; and
- Limiting how close tobacco retailers can be to landmarks, such as schools.

Project takeaways that policymakers should consider:

- Tobacco retailer density corresponds with tobacco use.
- Prohibiting cigarette sales in all stores except tobacco specialty shops is the retailer reduction measure most likely to reduce tobacco use in all types of Minnesota communities, over time due to overall cost increases.
- Coupling a policy that prohibits new tobacco specialty shops from opening or limiting where they can be located (e.g., no retailers to be located within 2000 feet of one another) can help sustain the impact of a policy that prohibits cigarette sales in all locations except tobacco specialty shops.
- Combining density policies with menthol sales restrictions has the greatest potential to reduce cigarette smoking through increases in overall costs among African-American and LGBTQ populations, groups that use menthol cigarettes at higher rates and suffer from health disparities,¹⁰ in low-income urban, suburban, and rural communities in Minnesota. Combining these policies also is most likely to reduce tobacco use in the general population in all Minnesota communities.



Typical retailer density before and after restricting sales to tobacco specialty shops in 6 different community types.

An interactive dashboard with more model details and results is available at <https://tobaccotown.shinyapps.io/Minnesota>.

Endnotes

- 1 WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, *WHO Report on the Global Tobacco Epidemic* (2017).
- 2 Center for Public Health Systems Science, *Point-of-Sale Report to the Nation: The Tobacco Retail and Policy Landscape*, Washington Univ. St. Louis and National Cancer Institute, State and Community Tobacco Control Research Initiative (2014) (estimating 375,000 tobacco retailers in the U.S., not including retailers that only sell e-cigarettes).
- 3 U.S. Dep't of Health and Human Servs., Food and Drug Administration, *Deeming Tobacco Products to be Subject to the Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act, as Amended by the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act: Final Regulatory Impact Analysis* (2016), <https://www.fda.gov/downloads/AboutFDA/ReportsManualsForms/Reports/EconomicAnalyses/UCM500254.pdf> (estimating that between 5,000 and 10,000 U.S. retailers sold only e-cigarettes).
- 4 U.S. Dep't of Health and Human Servs., Ctrs. for Disease Control and Prevention, *Preventing Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults: A Report of the Surgeon General* (2012).
- 5 Wing Chan, *Tobacco Retailer Density Surrounding Schools and Youth Smoking Behaviour: A Multi-level Analysis* 9 TOBACCO INDUCED DISEASES 9 (2011), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3158107>.
- 6 Lisa Henriksen et al., *Is Adolescent Smoking Related to the Density and Proximity of Tobacco Outlets and Retail Cigarette Advertising Near Schools* 47 PREVENTIVE MEDICINE 210-14 (2008).
- 7 Lorraine Reitzel et al., *The Effect of Tobacco Outlet Density and Proximity on Smoking Cessation*, 101 AM. J. PUBLIC HEALTH 315-20 (2011), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3020198>.
- 8 Andrea Villanti et al., *Menthol Cigarettes and the Public Health Standard: A Systematic Review*, 17 BMC PUBLIC HEALTH 983 (2017), <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12889-017-4987-z>.
- 9 Minnesota Dep't of Health, *Tobacco Data* (last accessed Dec. 15, 2018), http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/tpc/docs/tobacco_data.pdf.
- 10 Ctrs. for Disease Control and Prevention, *Natural Adult Tobacco Surveys (2012-13) (2013-14)*, https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/surveys/nats/index.htm.