



SANTA CRUZ COUNTY “FILTER” SALES BAN: LEADING WITH UPSTREAM SOLUTIONS

AGENDA: SANTA CRUZ COUNTY “FILTER” SALES BAN LEADING WITH UPSTREAM POLICIES

PART 1: (TODAY)

1. The problem and the need for source-level solutions
 - No safe end of life solution and shifting burdens back
2. Santa Cruz County’s Ordinance
 - The process from beginning to end
 - Data collection and community engagement
 - Colossal effort pays off
3. Q&A

PART 2: (FEBRUARY 10)

TODAY'S PRESENTERS

Introduction:

Carolina Saavedra

Senior Staff Attorney

Public Health Law Center

Main speaker:

Tara Leonard, MPH

Tobacco Education and Prevention
Program, Project Director

Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency

WHO WE ARE

The Law and Policy Partnership to End the Commercial Tobacco Epidemic (the Partnership) is a joint initiative of the American Lung Association and the Public Health Law Center to support tobacco control professionals in their work to end the commercial tobacco epidemic in California.

The Partnership provides free technical assistance, research, training, and analysis to help communities pass strong local tobacco ordinances that are both effective and legally sound.

LEGAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

-  Legal Research
-  Policy Development, Implementation, Defense
-  Publications
-  Trainings
-  Direct Representation
-  Lobby

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT



Photo Taken at Owamni Restaurant - Minneapolis, MN

RESPECTING TRADITIONAL TOBACCO



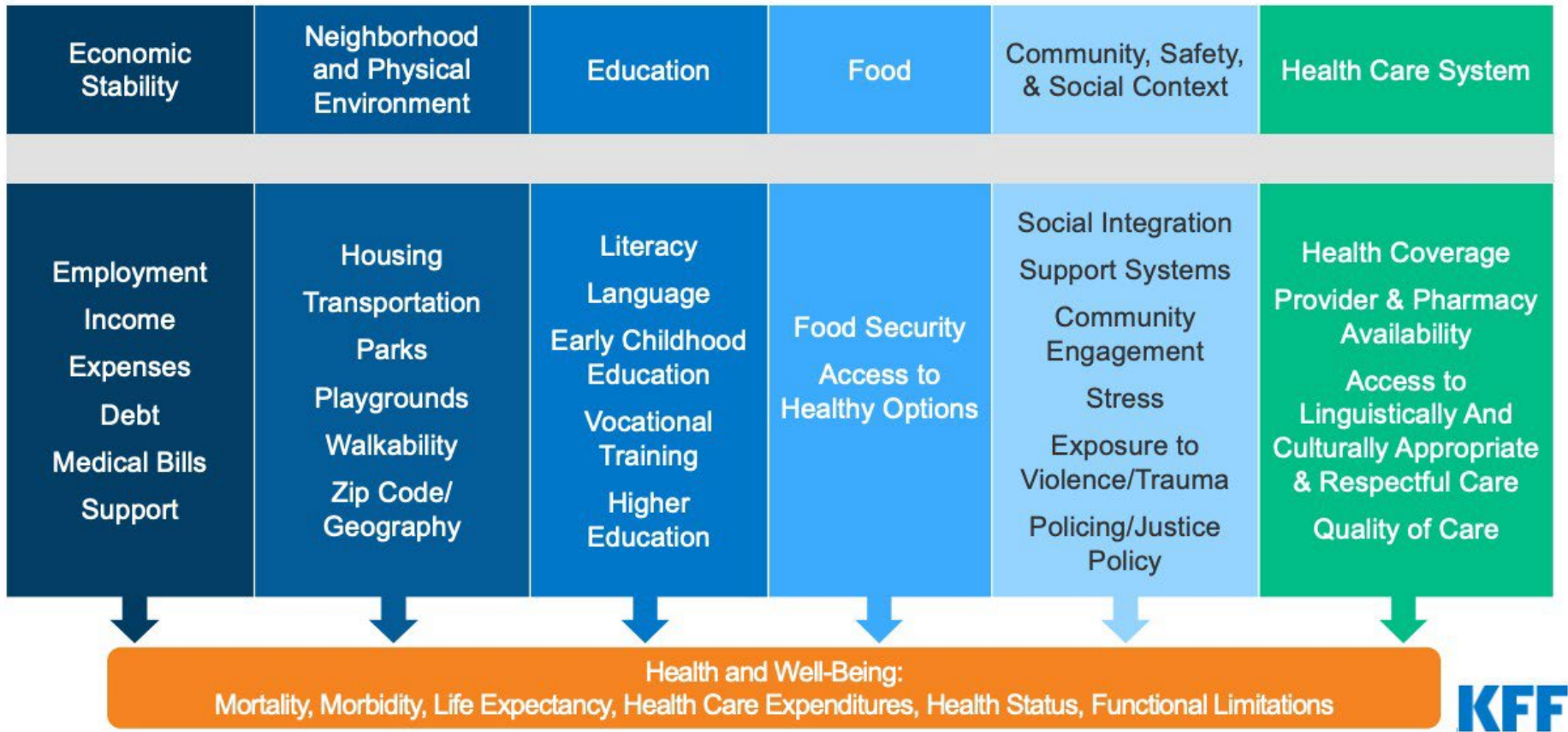
Tobacco traditions have been passed down for generations. Tobacco plants are considered a sacred medicine for many Indigenous people.

<https://keepitsacred.itcml.org/>



<https://www.glitc.org/publications/walking-toward-the-sacred-our-great-lakes-tobacco-story/>

Social Determinants of Health



Source: [Kaiser Family Foundation](https://www.kff.org/)

CIGARETTE BUTTS = HAZARDOUS WASTE

Throwaway Culture

- Most commonly littered item

Cellulose Acetate

- Non-biodegradable; creates microplastic

Toxic Chemicals & Metals

- Nicotine, lead, arsenic, etc.



ENVIRONMENTAL INJUSTICE AND WASTE

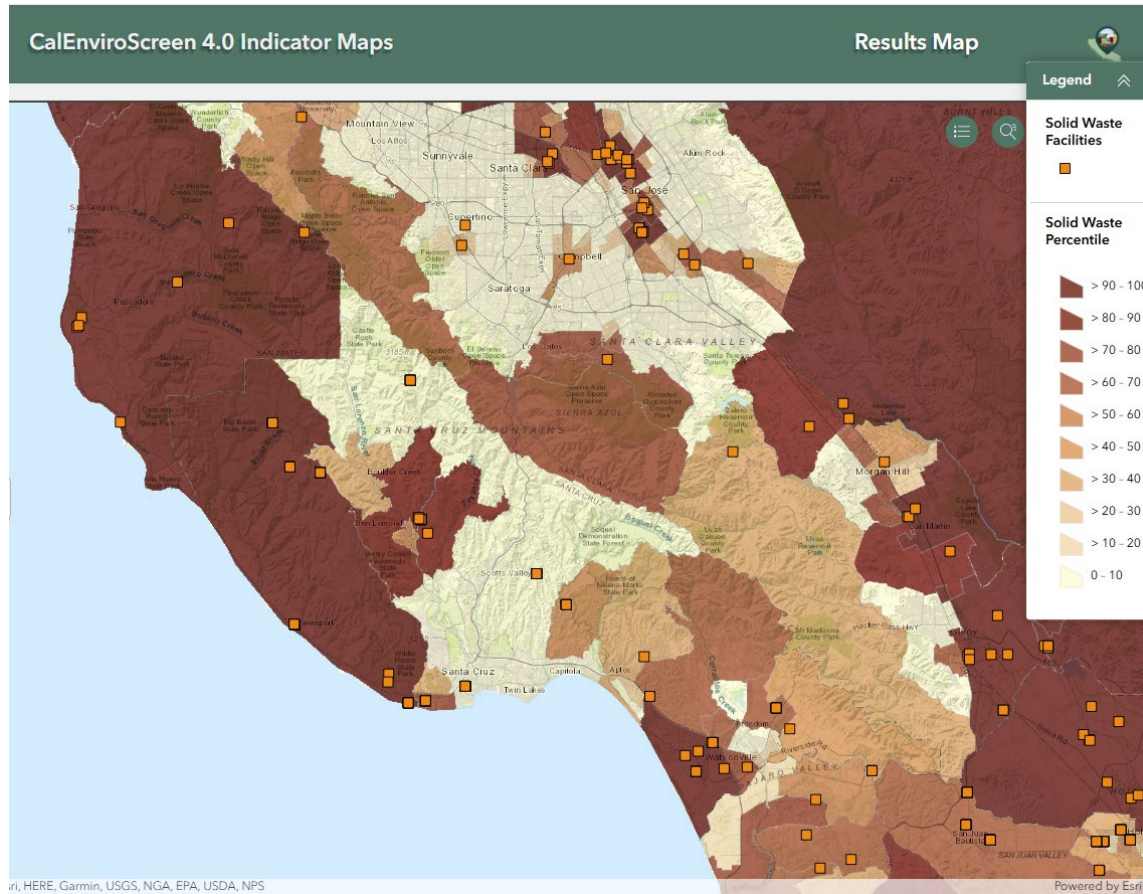
- The concept of “away”
 - Incentivizes throw-away culture
 - *Overburdens* some to *underburden* others
- Disparate municipal services
 - Street sweeping, garbage collection
 - Siting of landfills, incineration facilities
- Where the waste will be stored/disposed of must be central to TPW policy solutions



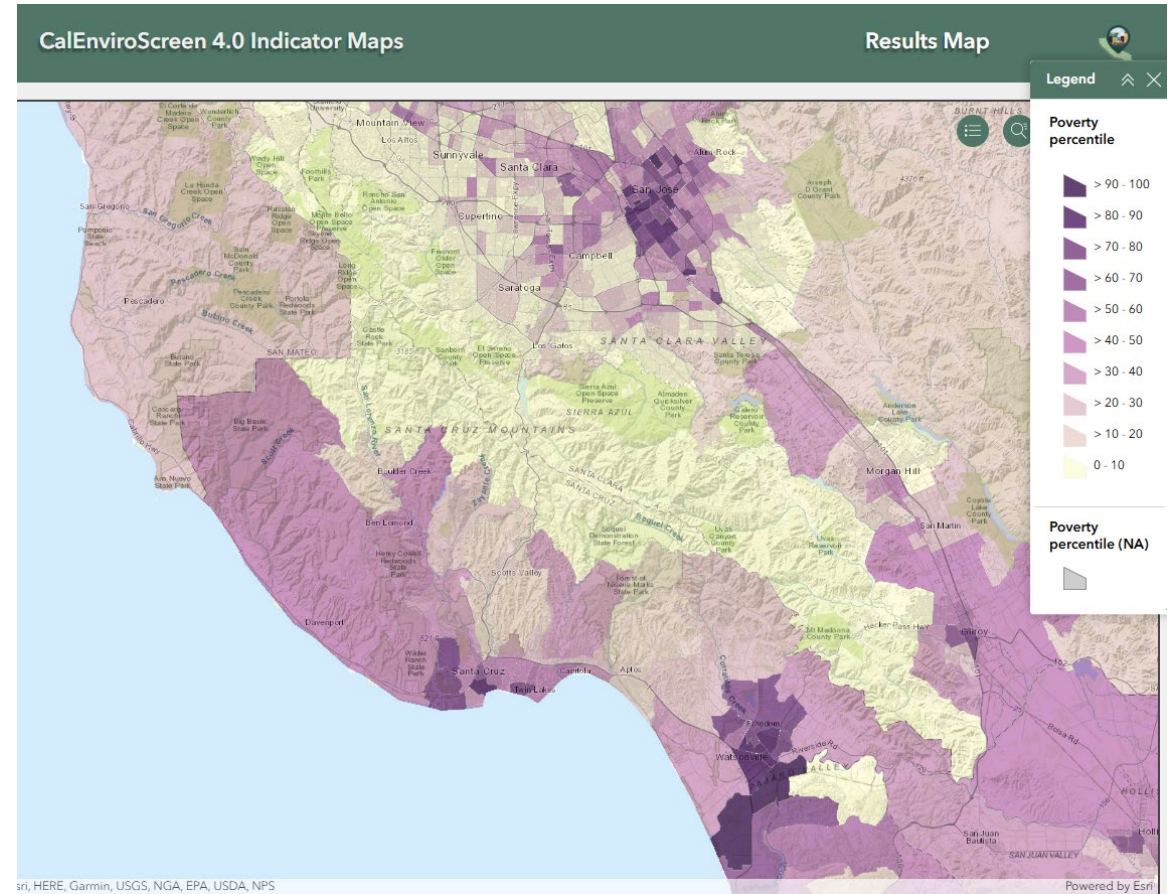
A compactor pushes loads of garbage at the Prairie View Landfill in Wilmington, Ill. (JOHN SMIERCIAK / Chicago Tribune)

Photo source: [chicagotribune.com](https://www.chicagotribune.com)

SOLID WASTE FACILITIES



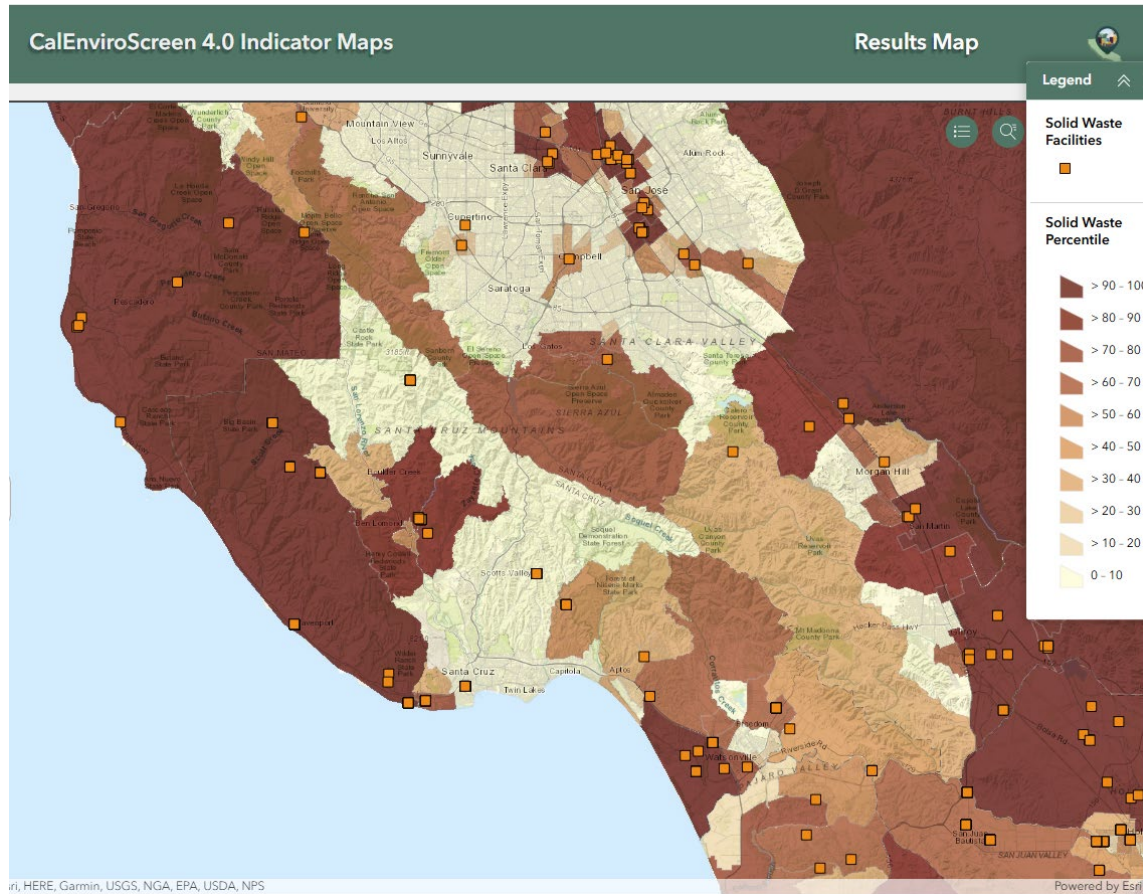
POVERTY INDICATORS



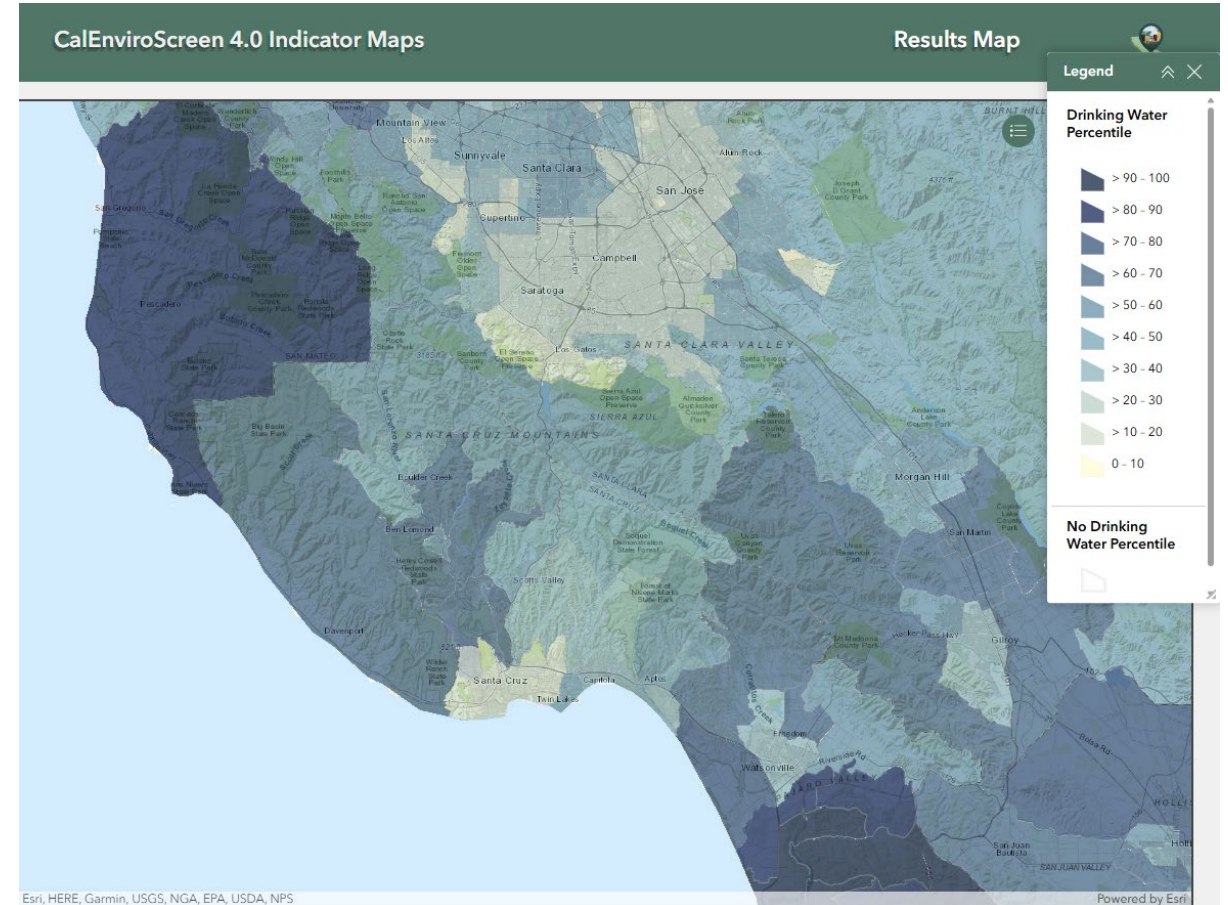
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<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ed5953d89038431dbf4f22ab9abfe40d/page/Indicators?views=Poverty>

SOLID WASTE FACILITIES



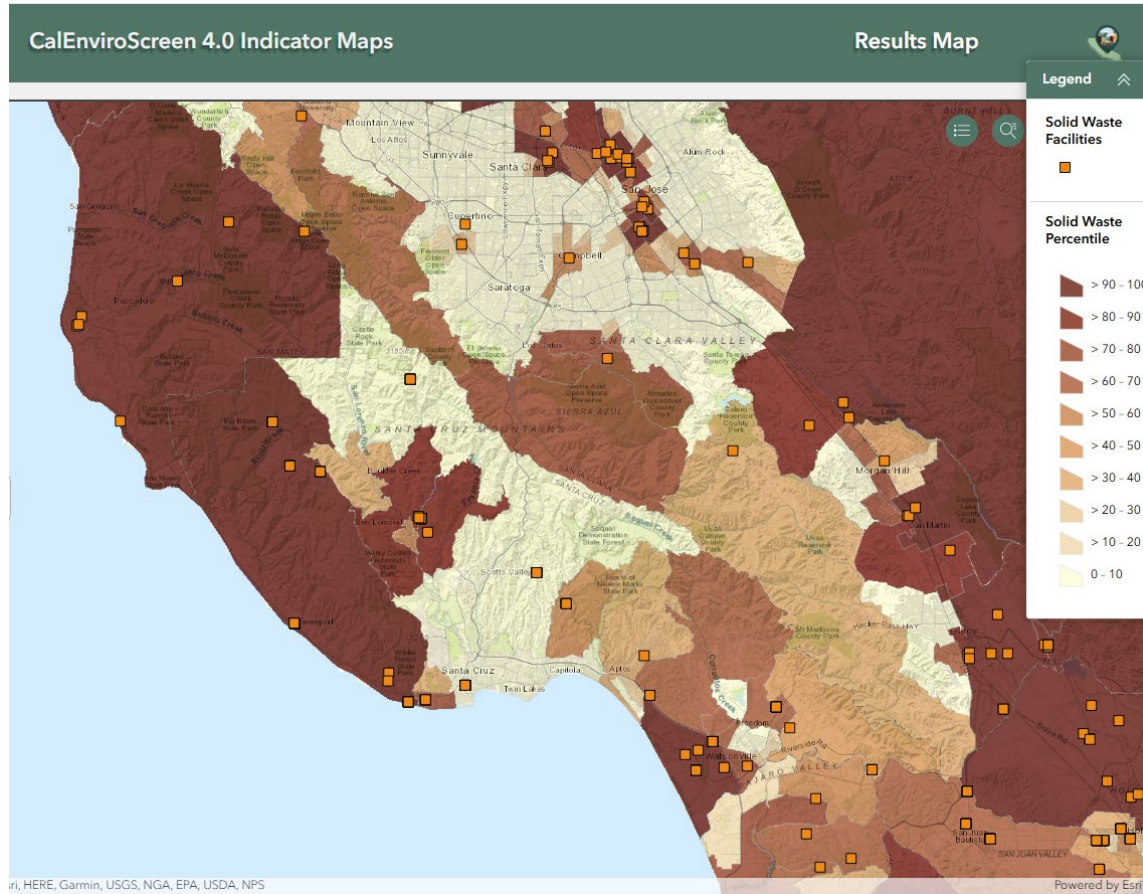
DRINKING WATER CONTAMINANTS



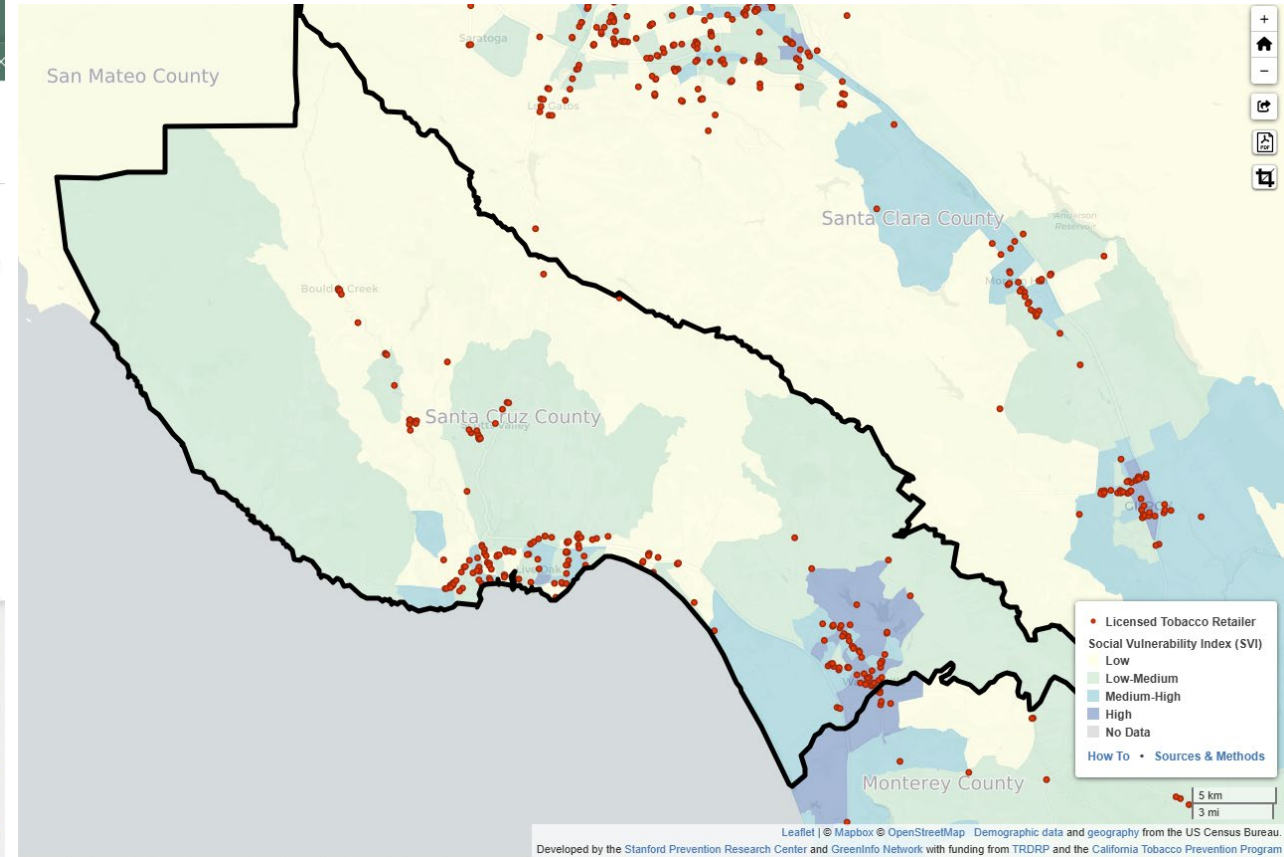
<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ed5953d89038431dbf4f22ab9abfe40d/page/Indicators?views=Solid-Waste-Sites>

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ed5953d89038431dbf4f22ab9abfe40d/page/Indicators?views=Drinking-Water-Contaminants>

SOLID WASTE FACILITIES



CTHAT TOBACCO RETAILER MAP



<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/ed5953d89038431dbf4f22ab9abfe40d/page/Indicators?views=Solid-Waste-Sites>

<https://cthat.org/#>

NO HARMLESS END OF LIFE FOR TOBACCO PRODUCTS



Cigarette butts are turned into mosquito repellent and stuffing for soft toys at this Indian factory



At Gupta's factory on the outskirts of the Indian capital, workers also separate out the butts' **tobacco**, which is turned into compost powder.

His company - Code Effort - has **recycled** over 300 million cigarette butts from the city streets so far.

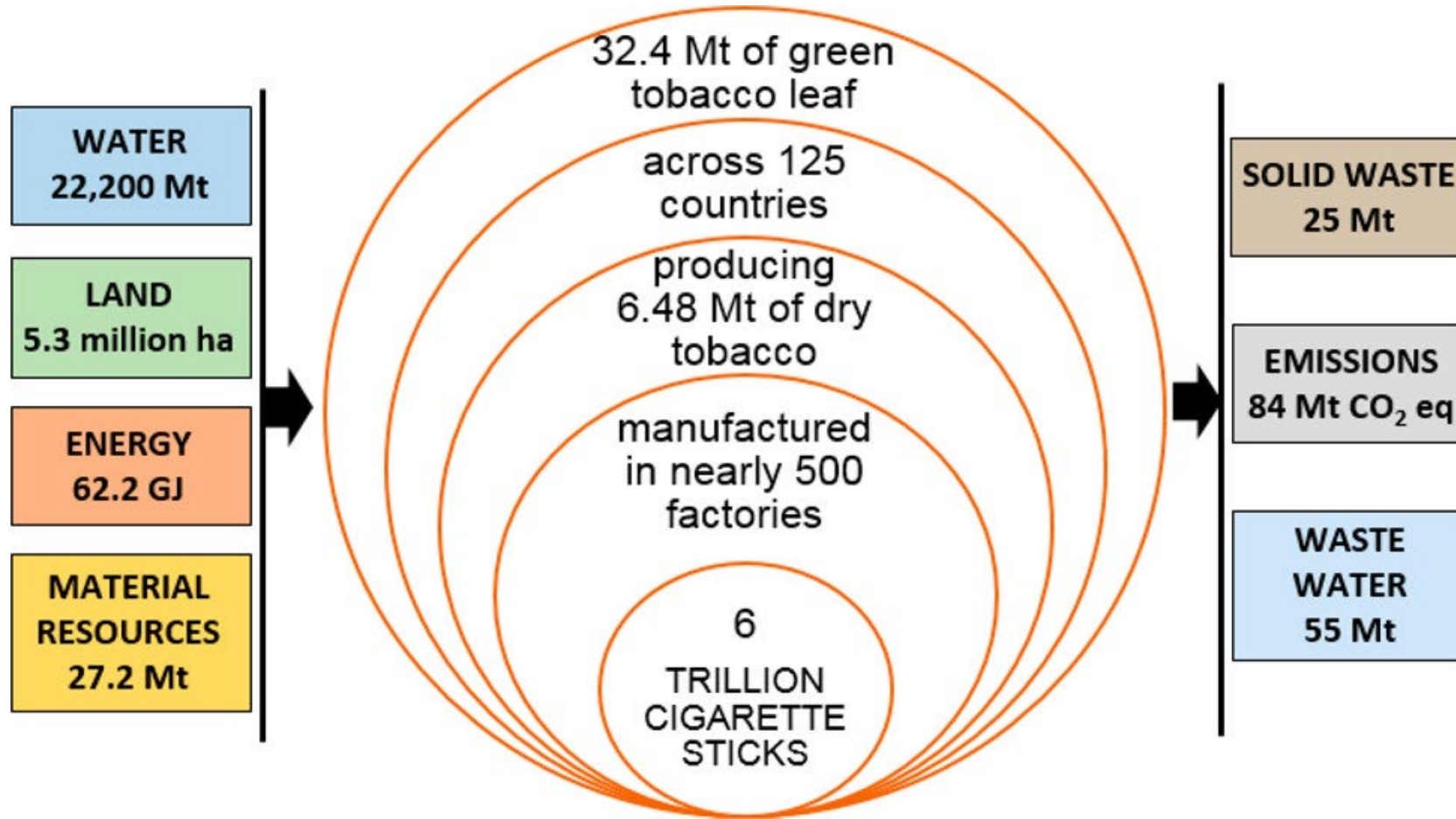


Recycled fibre made from cigarette filter tips is seen in a cotton gin machine at a cigarette butt recycling factory in Noida, India. - REUTERS/Anushree Fadnavis

Source: [Cigarette butts are turned into mosquito repellent and stuffing for soft toys at this Indian factory | Euronews](#)

TOBACCO PRODUCT POLLUTION

THE BIGGER PICTURE



Credit: Zafeiridou et al.

WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY?

- Manufacturers?
- Governments?
- Residents?
- Waste Facilities?



POLICY STREAMS TO ADDRESS TPW

Upstream: cut it at the source

- e.g., Sales restrictions

Midstream: Facilitating collection and “proper” disposal

- e.g., EPR

Downstream: clean up TPW *after* it has been littered

- e.g., beach clean ups



LITIGATION

BALTIMORE V. PHILIP MORRIS USA, INC ET. AL.

- In 2022, the City sued tobacco companies over cigarette butt litter
- Data collection: Mr. Trash Wheel
- Property value loss, costs of clean up, costs of unmitigated waste
- Asking court for recovery of monetary loss, as well as abatement and remediation



Source: <https://www.mrtrashwheel.com/>

UPSTREAM SOLUTIONS SANTA CRUZ COUNTY SALES RESTRICTION

- **First of its kind!!!**
- Cutting waste at the source
- Addresses largest source of litter
- Data supported
- Community backed
- Facilitates compliance with Clean Water Act Trash Amendments
- Puts financial burden back on the tobacco industry



A FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND ORDINANCE

Santa Cruz, California: Surf City USA



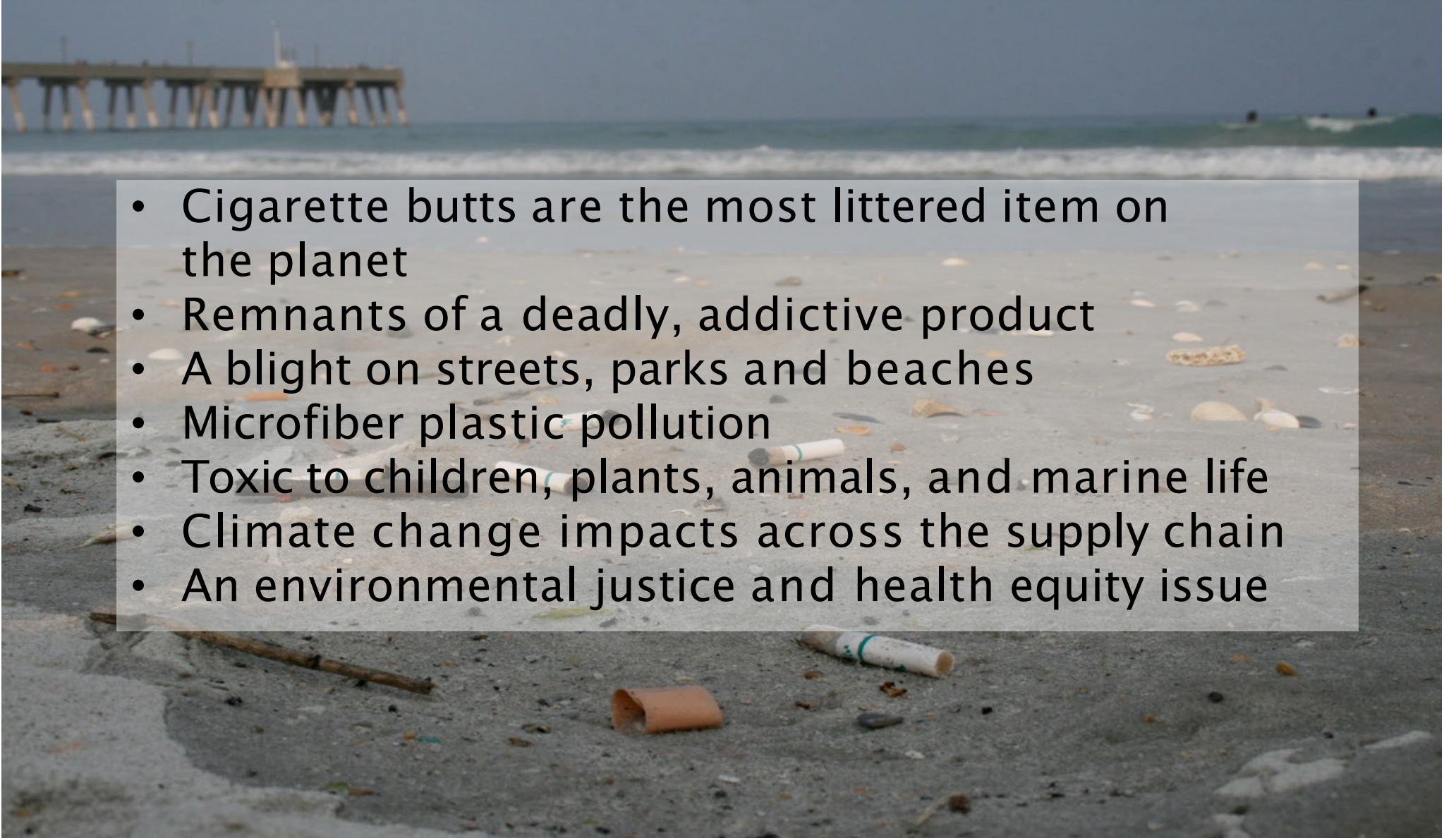
- Coastal California community
- Population: 259,432
 - Non-Hispanic White (63%)
Hispanic/Latino (36%)
- Five jurisdictions
- Home of UC Santa Cruz
- Passionate Tobacco Education Coalition (TEC) leaders and members
- Early adopters of tobacco-related policies (TRL, flavored tobacco sales bans, smoke-free parks, etc.)

Tobacco Education and Prevention Program

- Public Health Dept is the Local Lead Agency (LLA) for tobacco-related issues in the County
- Funded by the California Department of Public Health through Prop 99 and Prop 56, taxes on the sale of tobacco products
- LLA staff do not lobby
- We educate and advocate for a tobacco-free lifestyle and environment



Butts: A public health & environmental threat

- 
- Cigarette butts are the most littered item on the planet
 - Remnants of a deadly, addictive product
 - A blight on streets, parks and beaches
 - Microfiber plastic pollution
 - Toxic to children, plants, animals, and marine life
 - Climate change impacts across the supply chain
 - An environmental justice and health equity issue

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 particulate phase smoke is a thermodynamic impossibility.”



<https://merg.sdsu.edu/tpwwp/>

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.

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



CA Assembly Member Mark Stone's filter bans

Stone introduced state-wide filter bans in 2014, 2015 and 2018.

Concerns of policy makers:

- Decreased state revenue
- Increased health risk
- Increased fire risk
- Creating a black market

Our take-away steps:

- Correct misinformation
- Monetize the issue
- Use data to drive the conversation
- Organize for public support



Assemblymember Mark Stone



February 13, 2018 · 🌐

Today I've reintroduced a bill to ban single-use cigarette filters -- that is, cigarette butts -- in California, #AB2308.

Assemblyman Mark Stone wants cigarette filters banned

Phillip Molnar

PUBLISHED: January 13, 2014 at 12:00 a.m. | UPDATED: September 11, 2018 at 12:00 a.m.

News



TPW Policy Roadmap

Theoretical Framework: Community Organizing through which community groups are supported to identify a problem, mobilize resources, and implement strategies to reach a collective goal.

Community Assessment	Education and Outreach	Data Collection	Policy Development
Communities of Excellence Assessment	Tabling, Presentations, Cleanup Events, Art Activities	Tobacco Waste Assessments	One-on-One Meetings with Policy Makers
Key Informant Interviews	Paid and Earned Media	Tobacco Retail Store Observations	Public Policy Meetings
Public Opinion Polling	Materials Development and Dissemination	Public Policy Meeting Observation Forms	Technical Assistance: • From State-wide TA Providers (PHLC) • To Policy Makers
Identify Community Partners	Speakers Bureau	Relevant State and National Data	Support from Community Advocates

Public Health began TPW education in 2017



Identify nontraditional partners

Public Works/Water Quality
Waste Management
City Beautification Groups
Youth Groups
Schools (work with TUPE)

Surfing Groups
Conservation Organizations
Environmental Education Orgs
Museums, zoos, aquariums



Santa Cruz
Museum of
Art & History
at the McPherson Center

THE CIGARETTE SURFBOARD



SANTA CRUZ
COUNTY OFFICE OF
EDUCATION
DR. FARIS SABBABH • SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ DEPARTMENT OF
Public WORKS



Collaborate with Public Works

In 2018, Public Works added questions about tobacco waste to their stormwater awareness survey.

Respondents expressed strong support (84%) for a policy that holds tobacco companies responsible for the cost of cleaning up cigarette litter.

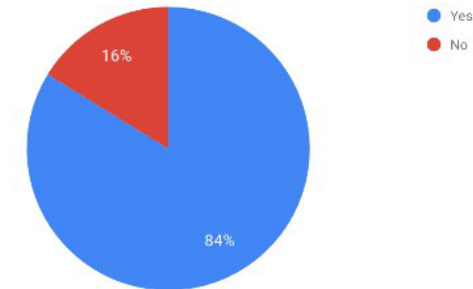
2018

Consolidated Santa Cruz County and Cities Stormwater Awareness and Behaviors Results Summary



Q35. Would you support a policy that holds tobacco companies responsible for the cost of cleaning up cigarette litter?

2018



	2018
Yes	966
No	187
Answers	1153
Skips	13

Respondents expressed strong support (84%) for a policy that holds tobacco companies responsible for the cost of cleaning up cigarette litter.

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

Item	Volume (tonnes)
Plastic Pieces	484,100
Cigarette Butts	439,358
Food Wrappers	181,478
Paper Pieces	149,144
Glass Pieces	109,011
Plastic Bottle Caps	63,216
Cans	32,992
Plastic Bottles	32,091
Straws	31,081
Packaging	24,854
Paper/Cardboard	26,233
Beach Gear	8,086
Fishing Gear	11,726
Wood Pieces	9,055
Nails	9,534
Aluminum Pail	9,049
Other	20,511
Clothes	15,213
Food Containers	15,612
Tobacco	11,097
Balloons	9,782
Personal Hygiene	7,349

-  Mixed
-  Wood
-  Glass
-  Metal
-  Plastic
-  Cloth

Cleanups engage the public, attract media, and gather local data

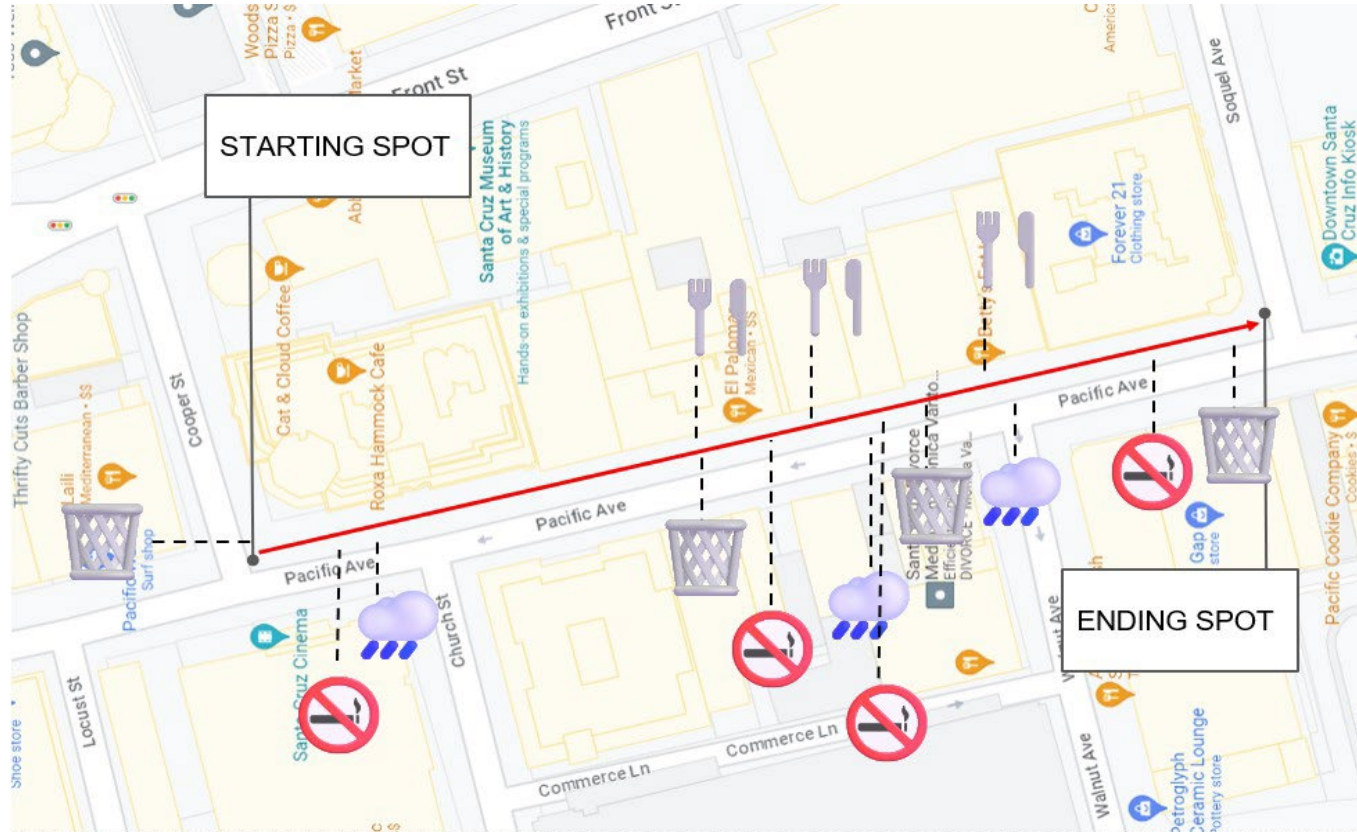


THINGS TO DO

Coast Line: Aug. 26 beach cleanup in Santa Cruz targets cigarette butts

A photograph of a "Tobacco Data Collection" form. The form is filled out with handwritten data, including counts of cigarette butts found in various locations. It includes sections for "Tobacco Data Coll", "Rows #1-4", "Rows #5-6", and "Rows #7-8". The form also has a "Thank you!" message and a logo for "Santa Cruz County TOBACCO EDUCATION COALITION".

TPW Assessment Mapping



Site 1: Downtown Santa Cruz (Pacific Ave between Locust St and Soquel Ave)
Length: 720 ft. Width: 32 ft. Area: 23040 ft/sq

Has: 4 No Smoking Signs, 4 Garbage Cans, 3 Storm Drains, 3 Outdoor Dining

iKickButts Data Collection Tool

- Take images and count tobacco product waste while mapping where you find it.
- Share images and observations on social media with elected officials, community leaders, and academic researchers.
- Create customized reports including maps and tables.
- Use community science data to advocate for more comprehensive tobacco control policies.



[Home - iKickButts](#)

Engage the media to spread key messages

OPINION > LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Letter: Cigarette butts are smelly, poisonous and gross

No Easy Solution For Cigarette Butts On The Beach

KAZU | By Erika Mahoney
Published August 30, 2018 at 3:00 AM PDT



▶ LISTEN • 3:54



1 of 8

According to Ocean Conservation, cigarette butts are the most common piece of litter found on beaches around the world.

Brandi Bates

The Butt Stops Here: Reducing Cigarette Waste-PW080

July 22, 2018 | By planetwatch

Filed in: [Climate Change](#) Tags: [cigarette butts](#), [ocean pollution](#)



Podcast: [Play in new window](#) | [Download](#) (Duration: 53:41 — 49.2MB) | [Embed](#)

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In 2015, the Ocean Conservancy's annual cleanup found a total of 2,127,666 cigarette butts, over twice as many as the next most common form of litter. About half of the cigarette butts were picked up in the U.S., showing that while the problem is global, it is concentrated in the U.S..

Rachel Kinn



LATEST HEADLINES

Guest Commentary | Urge supervisors to ban polluting tobacco filters

By [SANTA CRUZ SENTINEL](#)

PUBLISHED: August 27, 2024 at 2:13 PM PDT

Focus on health equity & environmental justice



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByOqnTUc98E>

Use art and visual aids

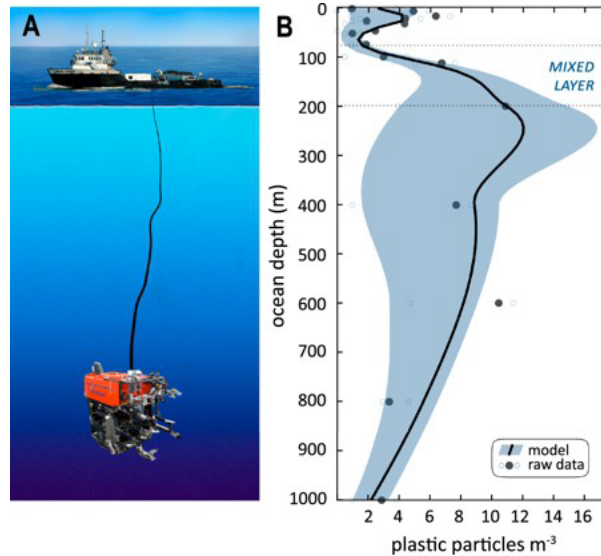


Photo credit: Karen Mason

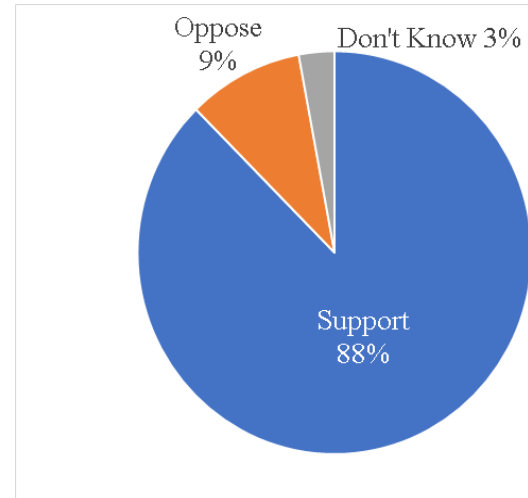


Photo credit: Ocean Conservancy

Take a data- and science-driven approach



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



Tobacco Control

Visit this Journal

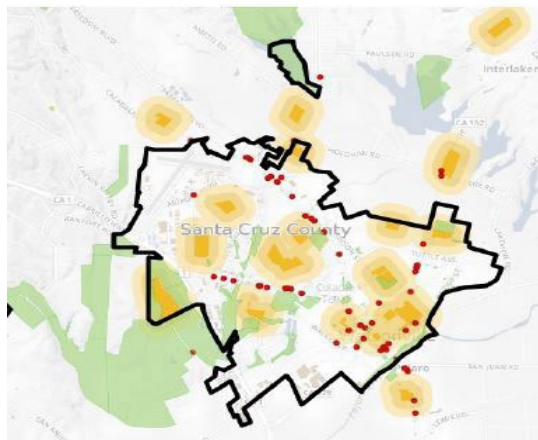
BMJ

► 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)

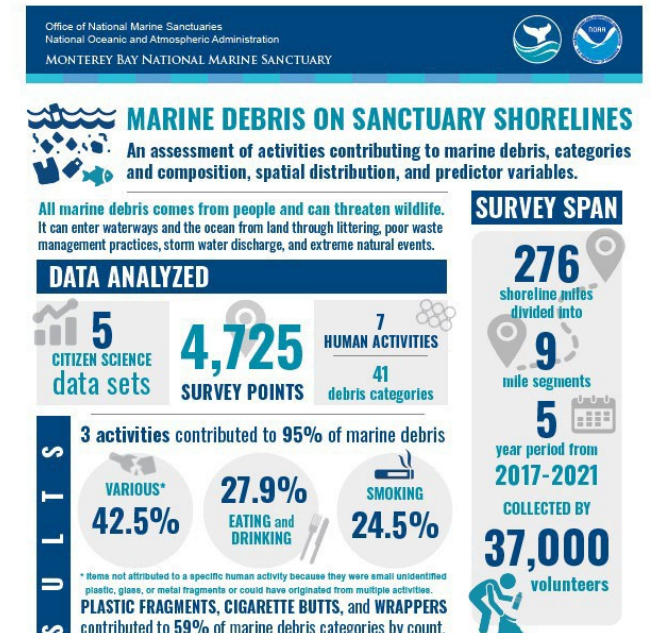
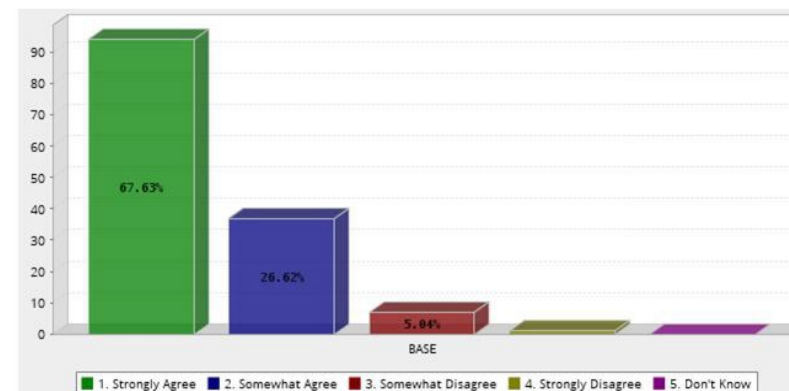
Cigarette filter ventilation is a defective design because of misleading taste, bigger puffs, and blocked vents

[L Kozlowski](#), [R O'Connor](#)

Watsonville Tobacco Retailers CCHAT



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



Link to state and national resources

TOBACCO PRODUCT WASTE

A Public Health and Environmental Toolkit



<https://www.publichealthlawcenter.org/sites/default/files/resources/Tobacco-Product-Waste-Toolkit.pdf>

Tobacco Product Waste in California: A White Paper

Thomas E. Novotny MD MPH,^a Stella Aguinaga Bialous, DrPH,^b

Kyra Hill JD,^c Laila Hamza, MPH,^d Marc Beutel PhD,^e Eunha Hoh PhD,^f

Jeremiah Mock PhD,^g Georg E. Matt PhD,^h



^a San Diego State University Research Foundation, San Diego State University School of Public Health tnovotny@sdsu.edu

^b University of California, San Francisco, School of Nursing stella.bialous@ucsf.edu

^c Public Health Law Center, Mitchell Hamline School of Law, kyra.hill@mitchellhamline.edu

^d San Diego State University School of Public Health, lhamza1974@sdsu.edu

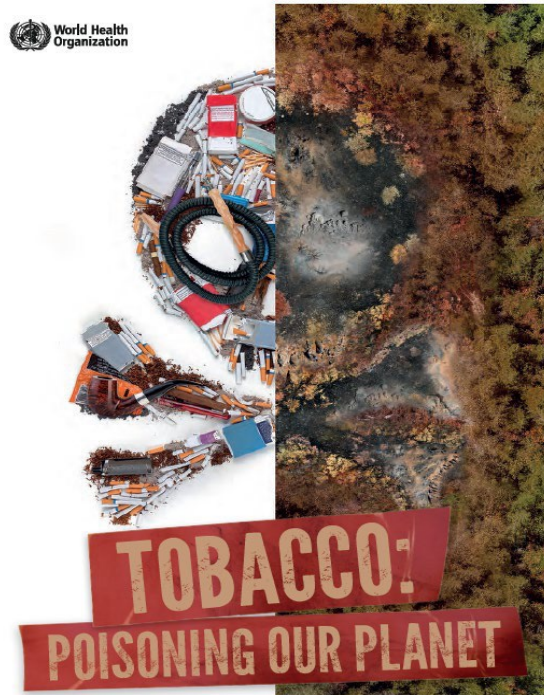
^e University of California, Merced, School of Engineering, mbeutel@ucmerced.edu

^f San Diego State University School of Public Health, ehoh@sdsu.edu

^g University of California, San Francisco, School of Nursing jeremiah.mock@ucsf.edu

^h San Diego State University, College of Sciences, gmatt@sdsu.edu

https://merg.sdsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Tobacco-Product-Waste-in-California_-A-White-Paper.pdf



<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240051287>



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



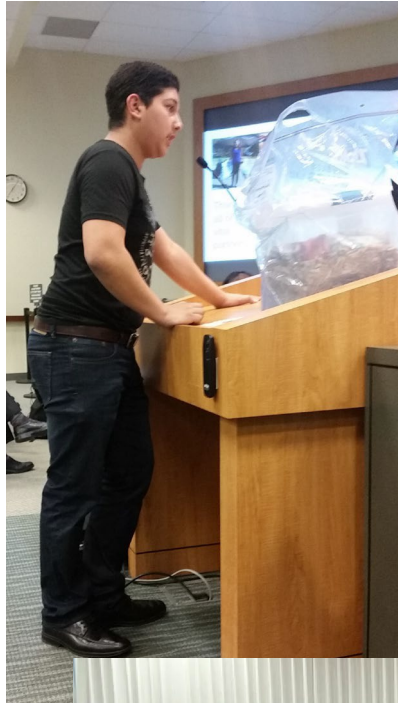
Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary

Final Report

October 2023

<https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/other-reports/marine-debris-shoreline-monterey-bay-national-marine-sanctuary-assessment-behaviors-contributing-marine-debris-categories-composition-spatial-distribution-and-predictor-variables>

Policy meetings early and often



[The Cigarette Surfboard](#)

By 2021, Reality Hits

One, tobacco product waste is a major problem in our community.

Two, elected officials were not ready to ban the sale of single-use plastic cigarette filters, or butts, the most common type of litter collected at local cleanup events.

So, what do we do now???



2021: Resolutions Pass in SC and Watsonville

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Santa Cruz as follows:

1. That the City Council of Santa Cruz hereby recognizes and declares tobacco waste a public health and environmental threat to the residents of the City.
2. That the City Council resolves to advance policy approaches to reduce or eliminate this toxic waste in our community.
3. That the City Council requests the Mayor to write a letter to our local legislative representatives urging them to encourage the California State Legislature to ban plastic cigarette filters.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 27th day of April, 2021...

Join Us!



Join us for a community meeting on tobacco product waste. Learn about the current policies and initiatives that are being explored by the city. At this meeting, we're dedicated to fostering an open and inclusive environment where all voices are heard. We value and seek your input regarding this project and invite you to register for our upcoming webinar or attend in person.



Scan to Take Survey!



MARCH 7
10-11:15 AM

Zoom Webinar
<https://bit.ly/CoffeeChat-03-07-23>

MARCH 18
11 AM-12:30 PM

London Nelson
301 Center Street

MARCH 20
5-6:30 PM

London Nelson
301 Center Street

Tobacco product waste (TPW) resolutions

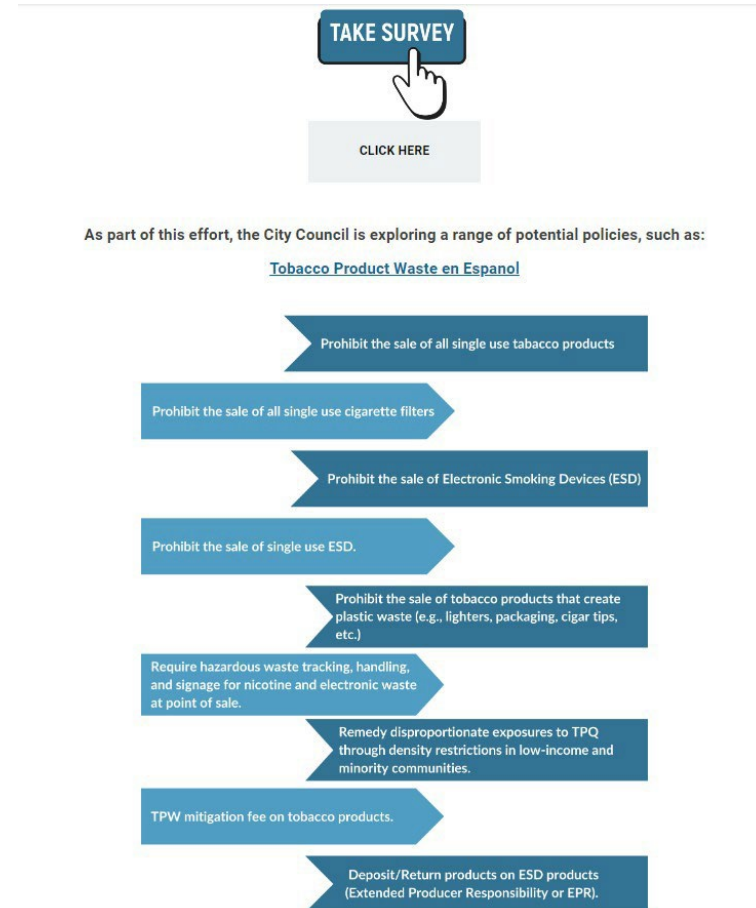
By 2024, all five county jurisdictions had passed resolutions recognizing tobacco waste as a public health and environmental threat:

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



Public Opinion Polling

- The City of Santa Cruz conducted a bilingual TPW survey in 2023.
- They found that 90.6% of respondents would support policies that reduce tobacco litter.
- Prohibiting the sale of single-use cigarette filters was the top policy choice for survey respondents.
- [SC City Tobacco Waste Survey](#)



Quantify the local 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**

2023: Resolution Passes at the County



Passed on May 16, 2023, the BOS resolution:

1. Focused on tobacco butts
2. Created an ad hoc committee for feedback
3. Had deadline of **January 2025** for policy recommendations
4. Committed supervisors to contacting the other four jurisdictions urging collaboration

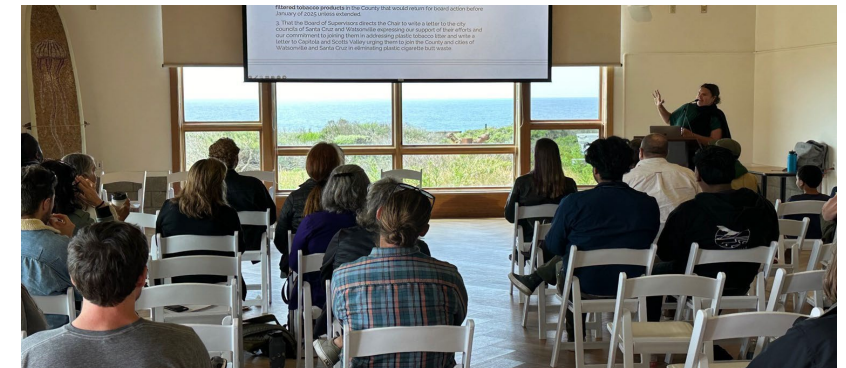


Serving the Community | Working for the Future

COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

County TPW Ad Hoc Committee

- Co-chaired by two Supervisors who were passionate about the issue
- Included community leaders, non-profit partners, environmental advocates, and a representative from each of the four incorporated cities
- Hosted numerous education and outreach events **including a tobacco retailer listening session**
- Evaluated a variety of policy approaches
- Worked with County Counsel and the Public Health Law Center (PHLC) to develop policy language



PARTIALLY INCONSUMABLE CIGARETTES/CIGARS

- Language matters
- Comprehensive policy
- No industry terms
 - “filter”
 - “disposable”
 - “biodegradable”
- Filter fraud/deception
- Avoids Greenwashing



Photo credit: Karen Mason

Won't smokers just get these products online?

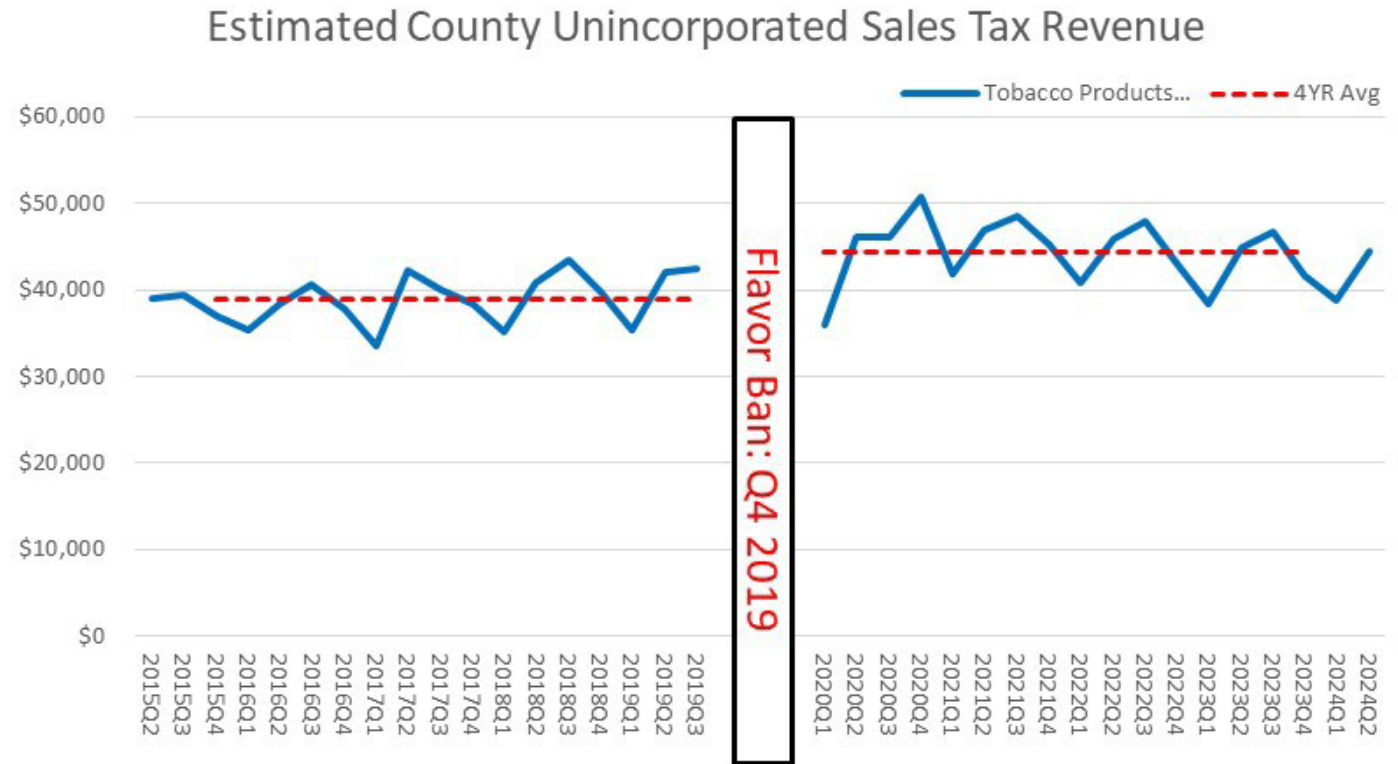
NO. Assembly Bill 3218 went into effect on January 1, 2025.

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



Look at tobacco sales tax revenue data

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



Remember, cigarette use is trending down

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

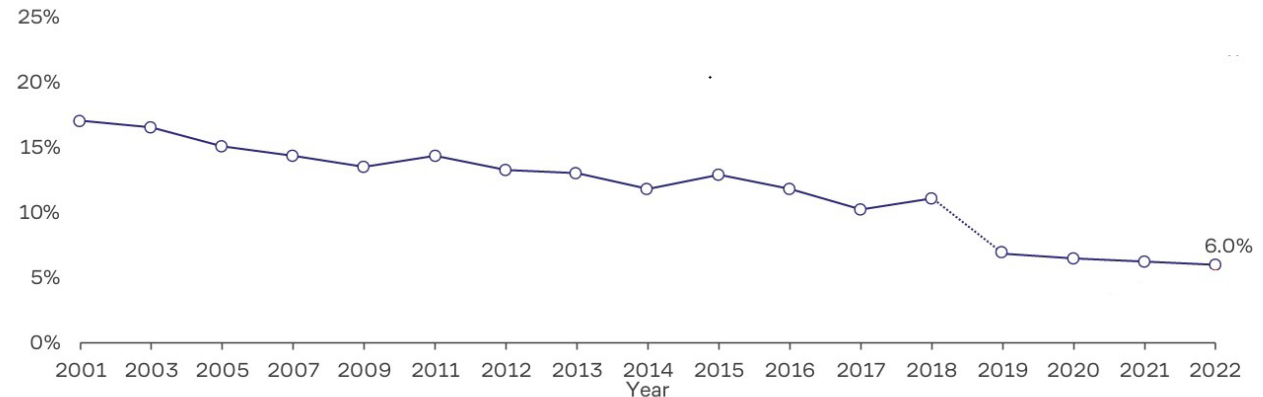
According to the 2024 California Youth Tobacco Survey 1.3% of high school students report using cigarettes in the last 30 days.

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.

Grassroots campaign strategies

- One-on-one meetings with every supervisor & multiple county depts and committees (Environment, Fish & Wildlife, Office of Ed)
- 50+ letters of support
- Op-eds and letters to the editor
- Signed petitions
- Dozens of speakers representing health, education, environment, and youth-serving organizations
- Individual students, parents, healthcare providers, surfers...



Policy success!

On October 8, 2024, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously 5-0 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.”

Big Tobacco pushes back



SMART SOLUTIONS, NOT BANS

Addressing Tobacco Waste In Santa Cruz Without Harming Public Health Or Local Business

Santa Cruz is voting on a filtered tobacco product ban. Let's pursue real solutions—not performative policies that risk public health and threaten our local economy.

TAKE ACTION

<https://www.cfca.energy/smart-solutions/>

Santa Cruz city leaders don't blink



In June, the Santa Cruz City Council sided with the environment, data, health, and science, passing the ordinance 7-0. The City of Capitola followed in August 5-0.

Implementation Planning

March 2026: Education to retailers including a cover letter, FAQs, a graphic of disallowed filtered products, and a retailer survey.

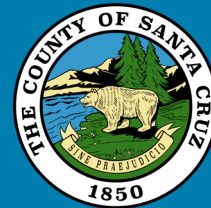
April 2026: Gather and analyze survey responses.

July 2026: Based on survey responses, create a retailer transition packet with information about customer services, business strategies, alternative products, and resources to ease the transition away from the sale of filtered tobacco products.

January 2027: Enforcement begins in the City and County of Santa Cruz with Capitola following in July.

Questions?

Thank You



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www.publichealthlawcenter.org/caltobacco

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