



East Central District Health Department
Third Annual Tobacco Community Compliance Report
March 2016

INTRODUCTION

East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) has had a tobacco prevention program for more than ten years. In addition, for more than ten years tobacco enforcement checks have been conducted to determine the level of compliance in Platte and Colfax counties. This is the third annual report addressing the response of enforcement of public health laws to address tobacco use, which is a risk factor for both cancer and heart disease.

We know that tobacco causes lung diseases, heart disease, and cancer and is involved with premature birth, stillbirth, low birth weight, and infant death. Secondhand smoke is also known to cause lung cancer and heart disease in adults. In infants and children, secondhand smoke is correlated with ear infections, severe asthma attacks, and respiratory infections (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 2014b).

The Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIP) of 2012 and 2015, listed tobacco use as one of several 'risky behaviors' by our community. Data found in the 2011 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) indicated that the district has, in some counties, higher than the state average use of tobacco among its population (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011). Youth substance abuse, which includes alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, is one of the five CHIP strategic areas for the ECDHD for 2015 to 2018. This report deals with one component of the work being done in addressing the issue - the enforcement of tobacco compliance checks. Work on this area is done through community coalitions. This report touches upon four areas in regard to tobacco:

1. Results of Compliance Checks
2. Youth Tobacco Use data from the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)
3. Community Health Improvement Plans
4. Summary

I. RESULTS OF COMPLIANCE CHECKS FOR ENFORCEMENT

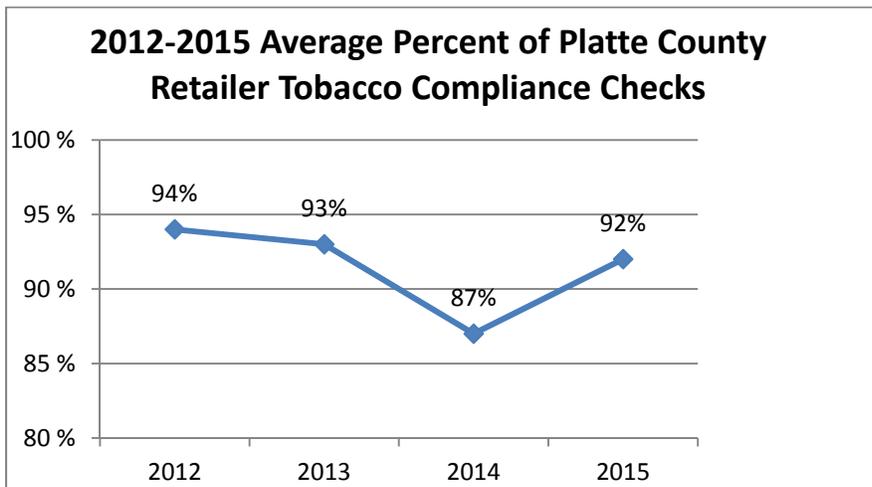
Compliance check data from Platte and Colfax counties is listed first by county, followed by aggregate data.

Compliance Check Data from Platte County

The chart below indicates the retailer compliance rate on a yearly basis for the time frame for the four year period of 2012-2015. The frequency of tobacco compliance checks in Platte County varied. In 2012, 2013 and 2015, checks were conducted in only three quarters. In 2014 checks were conducted in all four quarters.

Looking at the annual percentage of retailer compliance during the 2012-2015 enforcement checks, it can be seen that over the last four years, compliance gradually decreased among retailers from 94% in 2012 to 93% in 2013 followed by a lower compliance in 2014 of 85%. However, in 2015 compliance increased to 92%.

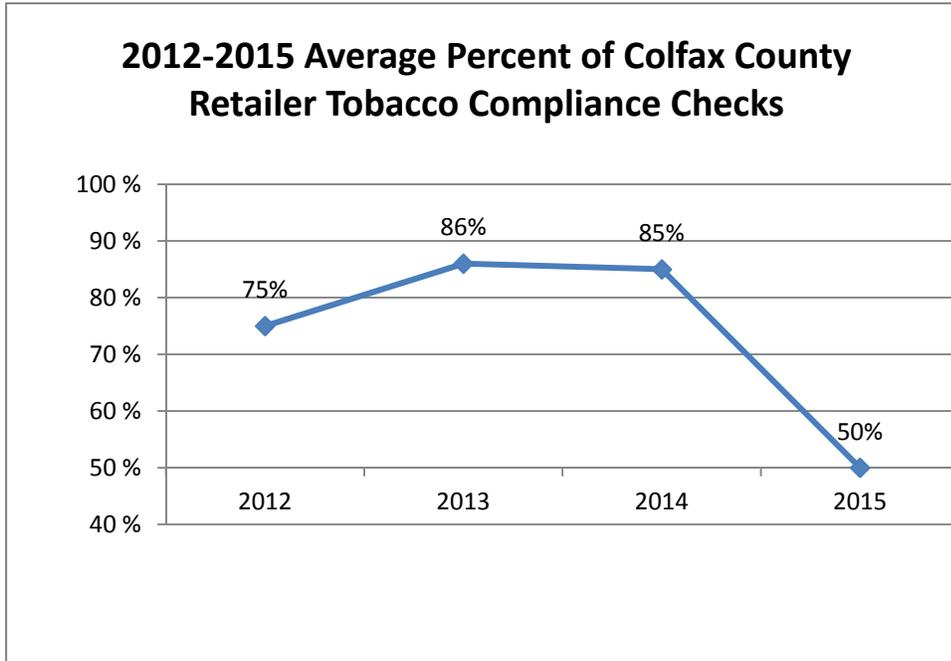
The enforcement of existing laws to prohibit the sale of tobacco to youth is an evidence-based strategy to reduce the sale of tobacco to youth (CDC, 2014a).



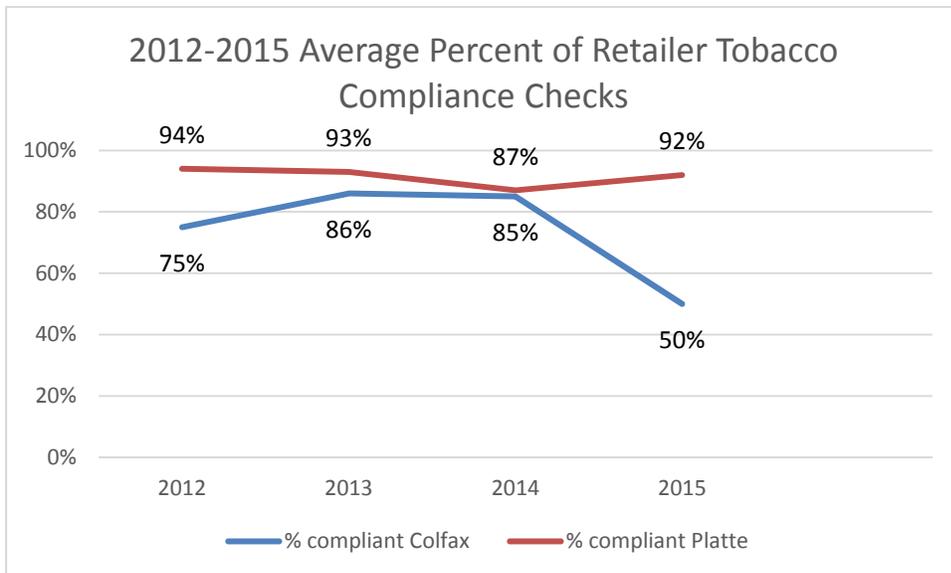
Compliance Check Data from Colfax County

Tobacco retailer compliance checks in Colfax County for the period of 2012–2015 occurred in one quarter in 2012 and 2015, and in two quarters in 2013 and 2014; none of the four years had compliance checks in every quarter. The lowest percentage of compliance during this four year time frame was 50% in 2015; the highest compliance rates of 100% occurred in April–June 2012 and April–June 2014. Looking at the overall annual compliance rate of 2012-2015 for Colfax County, in 2015, the year with one of the lowest number of compliance checks, resulted in the lowest level of compliance of 50% on average. In 2013, two quarterly checks were conducted which resulted in a slight improvement in

compliance with an average of 86%. The average compliance rate in 2014 was 85% which was a result from the two quarterly checks that were conducted.



Below is a chart that compares the results of Platte and Colfax counties from 2012 to 2015.



II. YOUTH TOBACCO DATA FROM THE CHNA REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

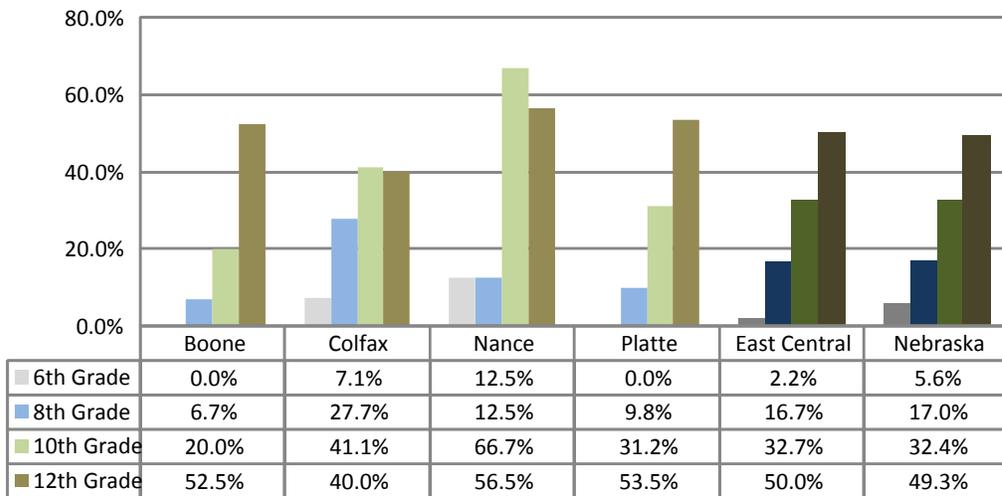
Tobacco Use and Tobacco Prevention

Complaints and concerns about tobacco are documented in the 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA). In particular, data to support the need for this as a strategic area is included in the 2012 CHNA on pages 98-108 (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011).

Lifetime Tobacco Use

One data set that depicts lifetime tobacco use among students in grades 6th, 8th, 10th, and 12th in Platte County is noted below. Youth in 12th grade in Platte County have a higher lifetime tobacco usage rate (53.5%) than the Nebraska average (49.3%). Overall, youth in the East Central District have similar lifetime use rates for tobacco as compared to the state (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011).

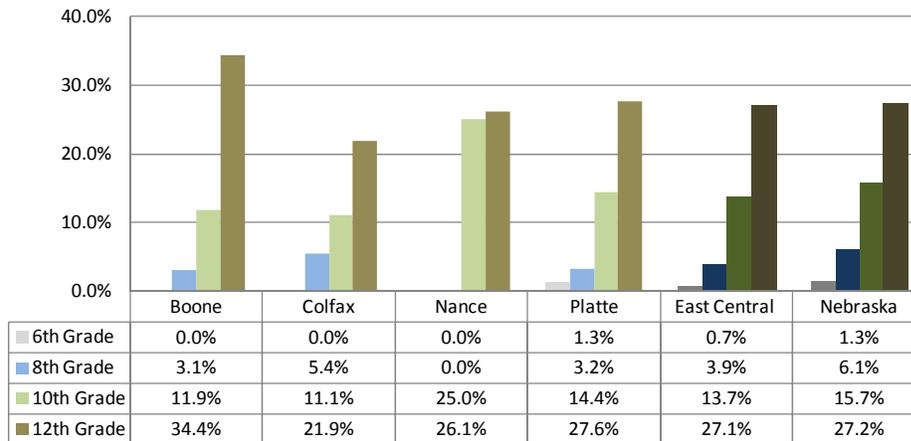
Lifetime Tobacco Use



30-Day Tobacco Use

Another data set, which is listed below, illustrates what 30-day tobacco usage rates look like in Platte County. Twelfth graders in Platte County had a slightly higher 30-day usage rate of 27.6% than the state average of 27.2%. The remainder of the grades had either equal to the state average (6th) or lower than the state average 30-day usage rates (8th and 10th) (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011).

Past 30-Day Tobacco Use



Source: Nebraska Partners in Prevention. 2010 Nebraska Risk and Protective Factors Student Survey.

Youth Perception of Parental Disapproval

According to the 2012 Community Health Needs Assessment, youth in the district report that their parents would disapprove of them using cigarettes at a rate comparable to the rest of the state (Schmeckle Research Inc., 2011).

	Percent of Youth Who Report Their Parents Would Say it is Very Wrong for Them to Use Cigarettes		
	8th Grade	10th Grade	12th Grade
Boone	86.7%	88.1%	68.9%
Colfax	82.7%	80.0%	68.0%
Nance	93.8%	75.0%	59.1%
Platte	87.8%	80.2%	65.2%
East Central	86.0%	81.2%	66.1%
Nebraska	87.7%	80.2%	66.2%

III. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE CHIPS

Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIPs) regarding youth substance abuse were developed for Boone and Platte Counties after the release of the Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) data in 2012 and substance abuse in general was chosen as topic for 2015 in Platte County. The individual county CHIPs are carried out by local coalitions under the direction of the Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program. The ECDHD has a Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax County Program that specifically addresses tobacco prevention and reducing the exposure of secondhand smoke.

During the Platte and Boone County CHIP process, substance abuse and its relationship with other district and countywide issues was discussed at length. These issues include teenage pregnancy rates, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), domestic violence, child abuse, motor vehicle crashes, aggression and fighting, and crime and suicide. While tobacco typically itself is not considered a drug, which may lower inhibitions and can affect and influence youth's decision making skills, it is considered a 'gateway' substance; meaning that using tobacco opens the door for other substances to be used (National Institutes of Health, 2011). It was felt that by addressing alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, many of these other community issues would be addressed as well.

The Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax County Program at East Central District Health Department (ECDHD) works toward decreasing unfavorable tobacco use data in youth, it does so in partnership with Healthy People 2020 objectives as listed on its website. The Healthy People 2020 goal for Substance Abuse is *"to reduce substance abuse to protect the health, safety, and quality of life for all, especially children"* (Healthy People 2020, 2015a) while a goal for Tobacco Prevention is *"to reduce tobacco use by adolescents"* (Healthy People 2020, 2015b).

- a) Service Gap Analysis- The following was identified during the CHIP meeting as a gap for substance abuse enforcement:
 - i) Funding for effective programming to include compliance checks.

- b) Assets and resources identified for enforcement:
 - i) Platte County Tobacco Prevention Coalition has the following agencies or businesses represented:
 - Tobacco Free Nebraska
 - Columbus Community Hospital
 - Columbus Middle School
 - City of Columbus
 - East Central District Health Department Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program
 - East Central District Health Department WIC Program
 - East Central District Health Department VetSET Program
 - East Central District Health Department Cancer Prevention Program

 - ii) Colfax County Tobacco Prevention Coalition has the following agencies or individuals represented:
 - Cargill Meat Solutions
 - City of Schuyler
 - East Central District Health Department Minority Health Program
 - Schuyler Middle School
 - Schuyler Police Department
 - ECDHD Cancer Prevention

- c) Funding for the Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax Counties Program is received from Tobacco Free Nebraska. A total of \$94,360 for both counties has been awarded for tobacco prevention for the period of July 2015-June 2017. However, none of this funding is allotted for tobacco compliance checks.
- d) With adequate enforcement, the community will address the selected *Healthy People 2020* objective related to this strategic area (Healthy People 2020, 2015b):
 - i) Reduce the illegal sales rate to minors through enforcement of laws prohibiting the sale of tobacco products to minors.
- e) Selected Evidenced Based Interventions that Support Enforcement. There are proven actions that can be taken to decrease tobacco available to youth, and is as follows:
 - i) Enhanced enforcement programs initiate or increase the frequency of retailer compliance for laws against the sale of tobacco to minors in a community. Known as “Compliance Checks”, this is a strategy in which youth under the age of 18, making no attempt to conceal their age or lie about their age, attempt to purchase tobacco from a licensed retailer (CDC, 2014a). Compliance checks are conducted by and coordinated with local law enforcement and violators receive legal or administrative sanctions. Results of retailer compliance checks are published in the Columbus Telegram, the districts largest local newspaper. In collaboration with Back to BASICs (Bringing Awareness to Substance Abuse Issues in our Communities), the Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax County Program will conduct, at a minimum, biannual compliance checks. Compliance checks will be funded by Back to BASICs and overseen by Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax Counties.

IV. SUMMARY

Compliance checks are an important evidence-based strategy in preventing illegal tobacco use in our communities (CDC, 2014a). In Platte County, it appears that compliance has increased slightly. In Colfax County, the data indicates that compliance is fluctuating with 75% in 2012, 86% in 2013, 85% in 2014, and 50% in 2015. When working with such a small number of businesses, the data can be moved significantly by only one retailer. Collectively, the results of Platte and Colfax data indicate retailer compliance during 2012-2014 hovers at about 89%, which compares almost equally to the 2011-2013 data of 90% compliance. However, the 2015 rates were the lowest that have been seen, at 50% compliance.

ECDHD is committed to collaborating with law enforcement in the future in regards to tobacco retailer compliance checks. These checks have been, and will continue to be, part of our efforts to decrease youth substance abuse rates. ECDHD continues to work on trying to change the statistics shown in this report for a healthier community and healthier youth.

ECDHD leads a Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax coalition, one in each county. The coalitions are formed of agencies and/or interested citizens that meet on a monthly basis to work toward decreasing the rates of tobacco usage in adults and youth.

ECDHD also leads a monthly youth substance abuse prevention coalition known as Back to BASICs. During this monthly meeting, Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax County coalitions focus on tobacco

education, progress on work plan goals, results of recent compliance checks, and gathering input from coalition members. Being a positive role model for youth includes educating our youth on the dangers associated with underage tobacco use. ECDHD believes that it is important to educate youth at a young age about the dangers and risks associated with tobacco use. Through this education we hope to empower youth to make healthy choices and for parents to positively influence their children and be a role model for other adults who spend time working with youth. If you are interested in learning more about the Tobacco Free Platte and Colfax coalitions, call East Central District Health Department at 402-563-9656 and ask to speak with Jamie Rodriguez, Tobacco Prevention Coordinator.

References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014a). *Best practices for comprehensive tobacco control programs*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health.
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