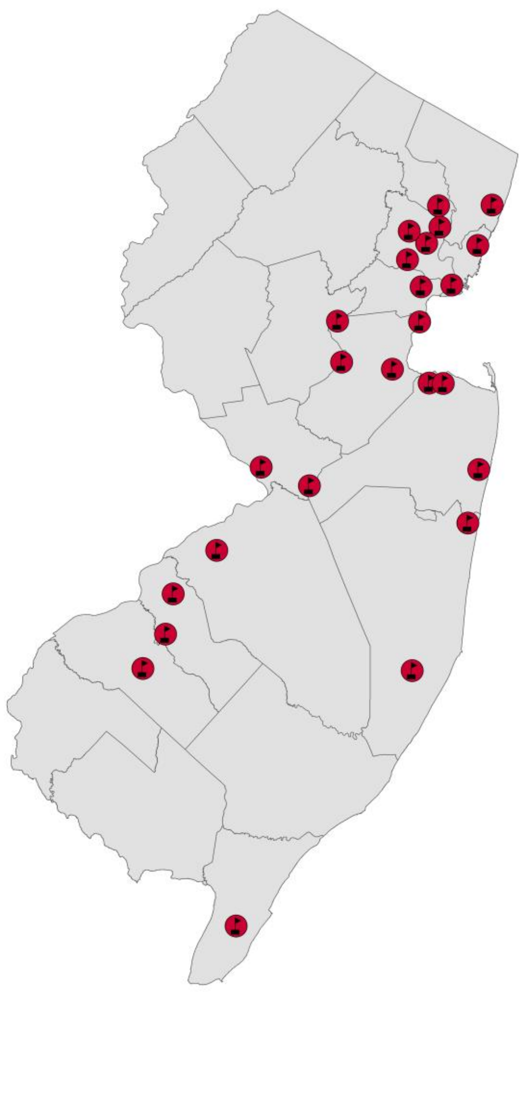
New Jersey Tobacco Point-of-Sale Project

August 2017



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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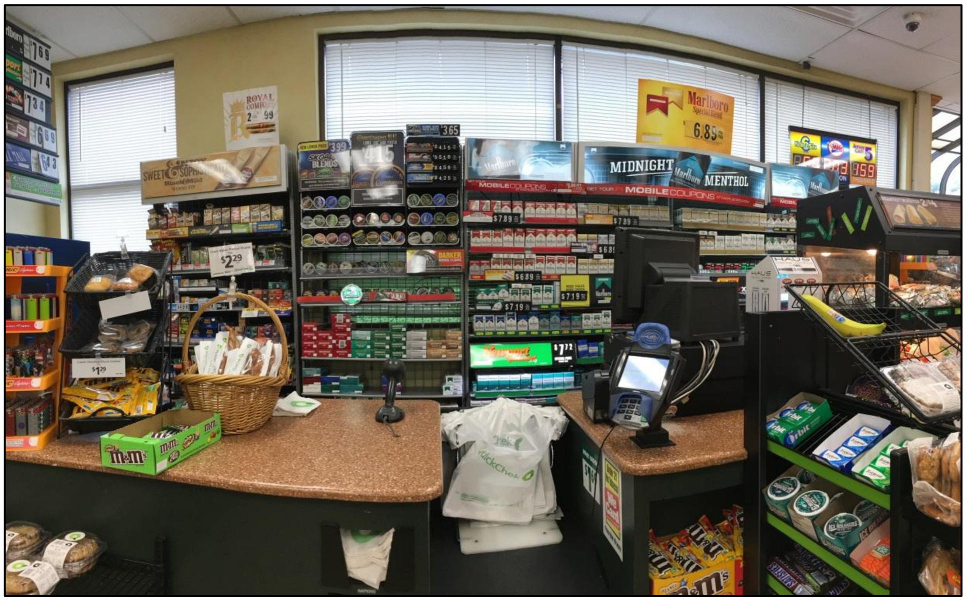
BACKGROUND

The tobacco industry has innovated many advertising methods including color lithography of the pack, skywriting, billboard photolithography, stop-motion animation, and coast to coast radio sponsorship.[1] Prior to the ban on traditional forms of advertisements (e.g., billboards, transit advertisements, sponsorships, and product placement in the media), industry executives were ready to mobilize towards point of sale advertising where their brands could be "dominantly displayed and advertised."[2] It is not that surprising then that after the 1998 Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) banned many traditional forms of tobacco advertising, the tobacco industry began investing billions of dollars marketing its products at the point-of-sale (POS). For example, in 2014, cigarette and smokeless tobacco companies spent more than $9 billion dollars on product marketing, most of which occurred in the retail setting.[3,4] The tobacco industry provides incentives to retailers to post signage inside and outside of their stores to promote their products. Among the most popular is a "power wall," an interior large shelving display that showcases numerous tobacco products, and features company logos and other advertisements (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. A tobacco "power wall" in a New Jersey convenience store



Tobacco advertisements in retail settings have the potential to encourage current users to keep buying tobacco products, entice non-users to start, and perpetuate the idea that smoking is socially acceptable. Exposure to tobacco promotions in stores is also known to influence product use among youth. The tobacco retail environment in areas where youth spend time (e.g., near parks, schools) seems particularly influential. Several studies have documented a consistent relationship between tobacco advertising near schools and cigarette smoking among students.[5,6]

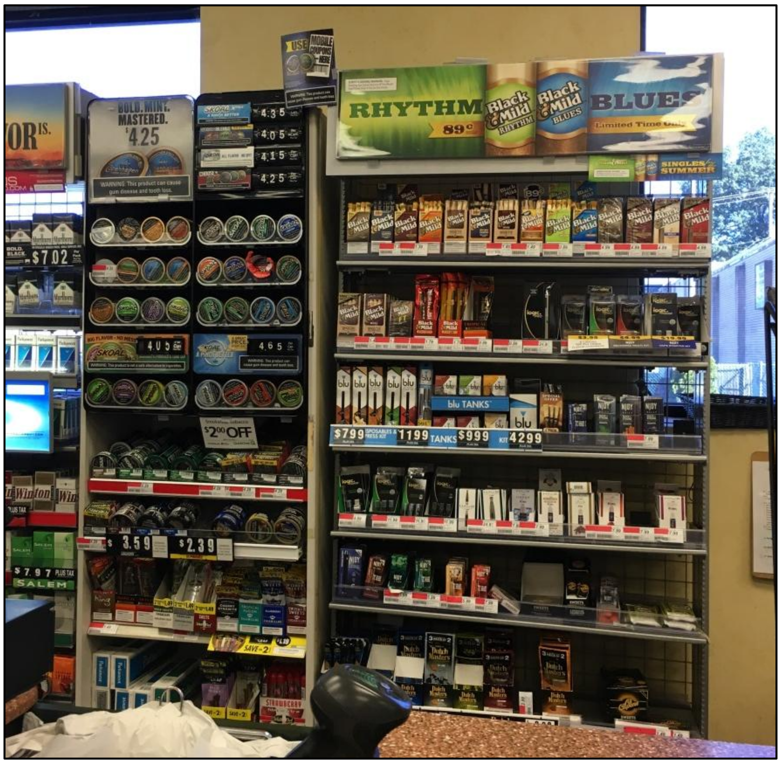
Although rates of cigarette smoking among youth have declined in recent years, use of other tobacco products, such as cigars/cigarillos, smokeless tobacco, electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) and hookah remains high and shows fewer signs of declining (Figure 2, below, describes these non-cigarette tobacco products). Data from the 2014 New Jersey Youth Tobacco Survey (NJYTS) showed that 12.1% of high school students were current users of e-cigarettes, 6.3% were current cigar/cigarillo smokers, and 4.1% were current users of smokeless tobacco[1]. The rate of current cigarette smoking was 8.2% in 2014. The promotion of non-cigarette tobacco products in retail settings is understudied, but emerging evidence suggests that these products (e.g., e-cigarettes, cigars/cigarillos, smokeless tobacco) are advertised in much the same way as cigarettes.[7] Figure 3 highlights the visibility of non-cigarette tobacco product advertising in a New Jersey convenience store.

Figure 2. Description of non-cigarette tobacco products

Product	Description	Examples
Cigars or cigarillos	Roll of tobacco wrapped in a tobacco leaf or another substance containing tobacco. Come in many different sizes and some include wooden or plastic tips. Among young people, cigarillos are sometimes used to roll blunts with marijuana. Popular brands include Black & Mild, Swisher Sweets, and Dutch Masters.	
Smokeless tobacco	Typically refers to moist snuff (sometimes called "dip") and snus (a Swedish type of moist snuff). The user places the shredded or ground tobacco between their lip and their gum. Popular brands include Grizzly, Copenhagen, and Camel Snus.	
Electronic cigarettes ("e-cigarettes")	A battery-powered device that produces a vapor that the user inhales. The vapor often contains nicotine, flavorings, and other chemicals. Popular brands include Vuse, Blu, and MarkTen.	
Hookah Tobacco	A mix of tobacco and molasses, with additive flavors, smoked through a single- or multi-stemmed charcoal-heated apparatus. Popular brands include Al Fakher and Starbuzz.	

[1] Rutgers' Center for Tobacco Studies is currently analyzing 2016 NJYTS data.

Figure 3. Non-cigarette tobacco product advertising in a New Jersey convenience store



AIMS

Surveillance of tobacco marketing at the point-of-sale near high schools can provide insight into factors that may contribute to elevated rates of tobacco product use among students. This project collected detailed point-of-sale data (interior and exterior of stores) drawn from stores surrounding a representative sample of New Jersey high schools in 2017. We present cross sectional and longitudinal (2015-2017) analyses that include the prevalence of product availability and advertising across all schools as well as differences by store type and locality (urban vs. non-urban school districts).

METHODS

The 41 high schools participating in the 2014 NJYTS were geocoded using ArcGIS, a mapping software program, and a half-mile buffer was drawn around each school. Half mile (2,640 ft.) was chosen as the cutoff based on the premise that this was the most convenient distance that students would travel before, during, and after school activities. All licensed tobacco retailers falling within this buffer zone were visited by one of the two trained field data collectors in June 2017. Using Qualtrics survey software on smartphone devices, staff collected detailed information about interior and exterior advertisements and product availability for cigarettes, cigars, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, hookah tobacco and roll your own tobacco. Each store visit took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

For this project, an “advertisement” was defined as an industry-made sign featuring a company’s logo and/or an image of the product. Signs that said “Cigarettes sold here,” for example, were not included. Only advertisements that were clearly visible and larger than the size of an index card (3” x 5”) were counted. Smaller ads are burdensome for data collectors to locate and count, but more importantly, they may be less noticeable to youth visiting the stores. Figure 4 highlights (in red) examples of tobacco advertisements that would be counted for this project.

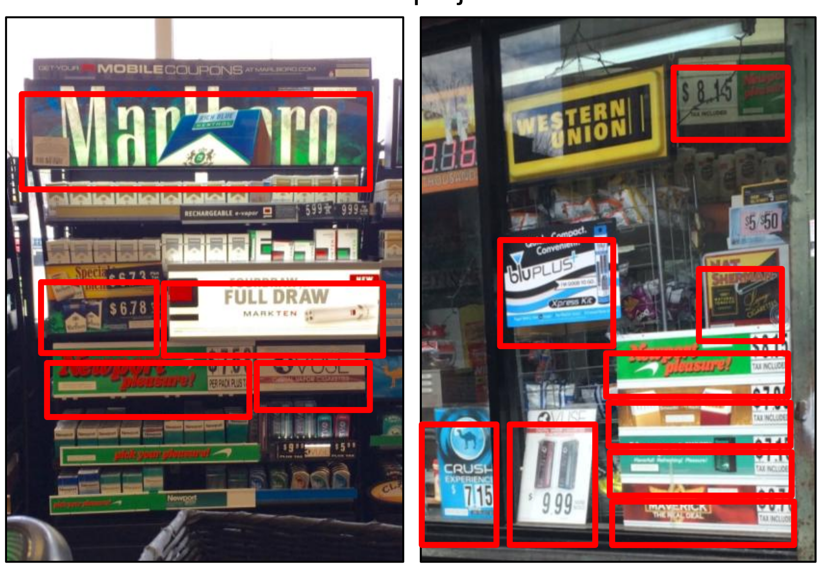


Figure 2. Examples of advertisements that were counted for this project

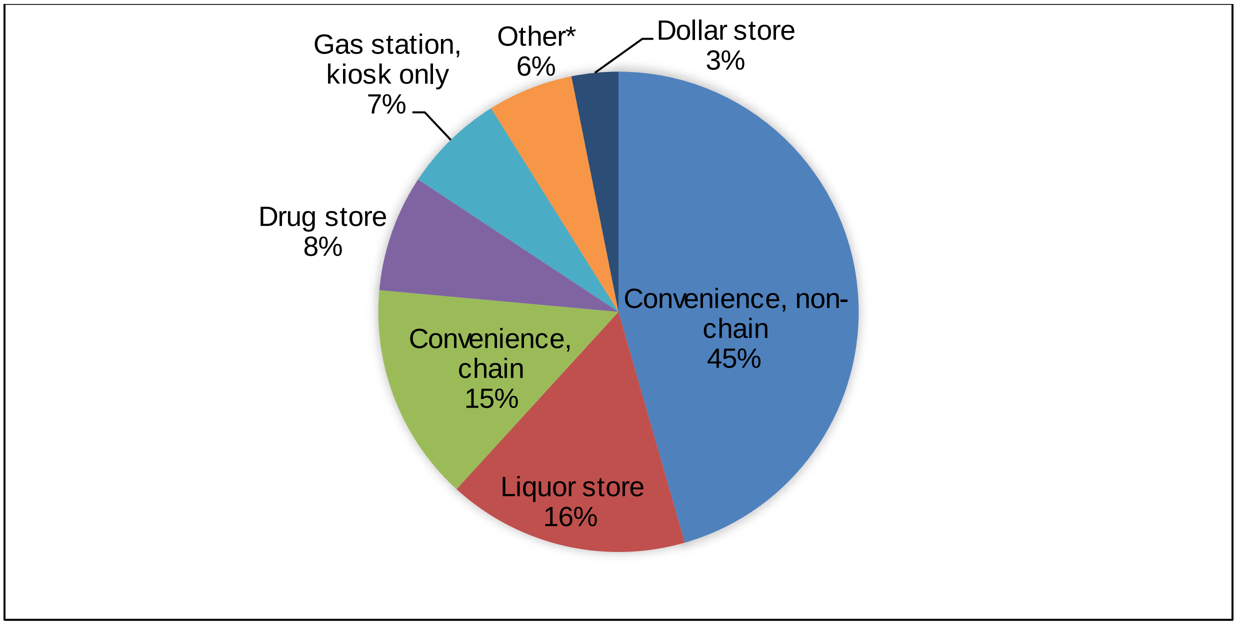
For each of the tobacco products studied in this project (e.g., cigarettes, cigars/cigarillos, smokeless tobacco, e-cigarettes, hookah tobacco and roll your own tobacco), we present data on the prevalence of exterior and interior advertisements and product availability across all stores in the sample. Additionally, we describe differences by store type (i.e., convenience stores, liquor stores, drug stores, gas station kiosks, dollar stores, “other” types of stores) and locality (urban vs. non-urban school districts). Urban districts were defined as municipalities with more than 10,000 residents per square mile (US Census, 2010) [8] and whose schools have greater than 50% non-white enrollment (NJ Department of Education 2017). [9]

RESULTS

Of the 41 schools participating in the 2014 NJYTS, 39% (n=16) had no tobacco retailers within a half-mile radius and thus were not visited by research staff. The remaining 25 schools had a total of 211 nearby tobacco retailers. Data were successfully collected from 90.5% of the 211 stores (n=191). Twenty stores were either closed, unable to be located, or went out of business. This completion rate matches our previous collection efforts in 2015 (89.7%) and 2016 (89.7%). The number of stores audited per school ranged from one to 51, with an average of 7.6 tobacco retailers within a half-mile radius of the school.

Figure 5 displays the distribution of store types in the sample. The majority of stores audited were non-chain conveniences stores (45%, e.g., “mom and pop” shops, urban bodegas), followed by liquor stores (16%), chain convenience stores (15%; e.g., Wawa, QuickChek, 7-Eleven, with or without gas station attached), drug stores (8%), gas station kiosks (7%), other stores (6%) and dollar stores (3%).

Figure 3. Store type, % (n=191)



*Tobacco store (4), Vape shop (2), Supermarket (2), Deli/market (2), Botanica (1)

Six of the schools in the sample were located in urban districts and the remaining 19 schools were in non-urban districts. Stores located near schools in urban districts (n=118) were more likely to be non-chain convenience stores compared to stores in non-urban districts (n=73). Indeed, nearly two-thirds (62.7%) of urban stores were non-chain convenience stores, compared to 17.8% of non-urban stores. Conversely, stores near non-urban schools were more likely to be chain convenience stores, drug stores and gas station kiosks (Table 1).

Table 1. Store types in urban vs. non-urban districts, 2017

Store type	Urban stores n (%)	Non-urban stores n (%)
Convenience, non-chain	74 (62.7%)	13 (17.8%)
Liquor store	18 (15.3%)	13 (17.8%)
Convenience, chain	7 (5.9%)	21 (28.8%)
Drug store	6 (5.1%)	9 (12.3%)
Gas station, kiosk only	2 (1.7%)	11 (15.1%)
Other	7 (5.9%)	4 (5.5%)
Dollar store	4 (3.4%)	2 (2.7%)
Total	**118 (100%)**	**73 (100%)**

Cigarettes

Table 2 describes the presence of exterior and interior ads by store type, as well as the availability of cigarettes. Overall, only seven stores (3.7%) did not sell cigarettes. Almost half of all stores had at least one exterior cigarette advertisement, but exterior advertising was more prevalent in dollar stores (83%) and chain convenience stores (78.6%). Notably, no drug stores in the sample had exterior cigarette advertisements. Despite having no exterior ads, 73.3% of drug stores had interior cigarette advertising, though interior advertising was more common in chain convenience stores (92.9%).

Table 2. Presence of cigarette ads and availability by store type

Store type	Availability %	Exterior ads %	Exterior menthol ads %	Interior ads %	Interior menthol ads %
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	96.6	56.3	48.3	66.7	56.3
Liquor store (n=31)	100.0	35.5	32.3	77.4	64.5
Convenience, chain (n=28)	100.0	78.6	71.4	92.9	92.9
Drug store (n=15)	100.0	0.0	0.0	73.3	73.3
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	100.0	38.5	38.5	23.1	15.4
Other (n=11)	63.6	9.1	9.1	36.4	9.1
Dollar store (n=6)	100.0	83.3	33.3	66.7	33.3
Overall (n=191)	**96.3**	**48.7**	**41.9**	**68.1**	**58.1**

Only 16.2% of stores had 5 or more exterior ads for cigarettes (Table 3). In general, chain convenience stores had the highest volume of exterior cigarette advertising, with 39.3% displaying five or more ads. One gas station kiosk had 28 exterior cigarette ads, the highest number in the sample. Among the other stores with exterior cigarette ads, most had between one to four advertisements. The volume of interior advertisements followed slightly different trends (Table 4). Over a third of all stores had five or more interior cigarette ads. Nearly three-quarters of the chain convenience stores had five or more interior ads.

Table 3. Number of exterior cigarette ads by store type

Store type	0 ads %	1 to 4 ads %	5 or more ads %
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	43.7	41.4	14.9
Liquor store (n=31)	64.5	29.0	6.5
Convenience, chain (n=28)	21.4	39.3	39.3
Drug store (n=15)	100.0	0.0	0.0
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	61.5	15.4	23.1
Other (n=11)	90.9	0.0	9.1
Dollar store (n=6)	16.7	66.7	16.7
Overall (n=191)	**51.3**	**32.5**	**16.2**

Table 4. Number of interior cigarette ads by store type

Store type	0 ads %	1 to 4 ads %	5 or more ads %
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	33.3	33.3	33.3
Liquor store (n=31)	22.6	41.9	35.5
Convenience, chain (n=28)	7.1	21.4	71.4
Drug store (n=15)	26.7	20.0	53.3
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	76.9	23.1	0.0
Other (n=11)	33.3	66.7	0.0
Dollar store (n=6)	33.3	66.7	0.0
Overall (n=191)	**31.9**	**31.9**	**36.1**

Figures 6 and 7 highlight differences in the prevalence and volume of cigarette advertising in urban vs. non-urban stores. Non-urban stores were generally more likely to have cigarette ads. Although the difference in exterior advertising is minimal, interior advertising was over 7% more prevalent in non-urban stores. Nearly 73% of non-urban stores had at least one interior cigarette ad compared to approximately 65% of urban stores. Non-urban stores were also more likely to have a higher *volume* of both exterior and interior ads. For example, over a quarter of non-urban stores had five or more exterior cigarette ads, while only 9.3% of urban stores displayed five or more exterior cigarette ads.

Figure 4. Presence of cigarette advertising in urban (n=118) and non-urban (n=73) stores, %

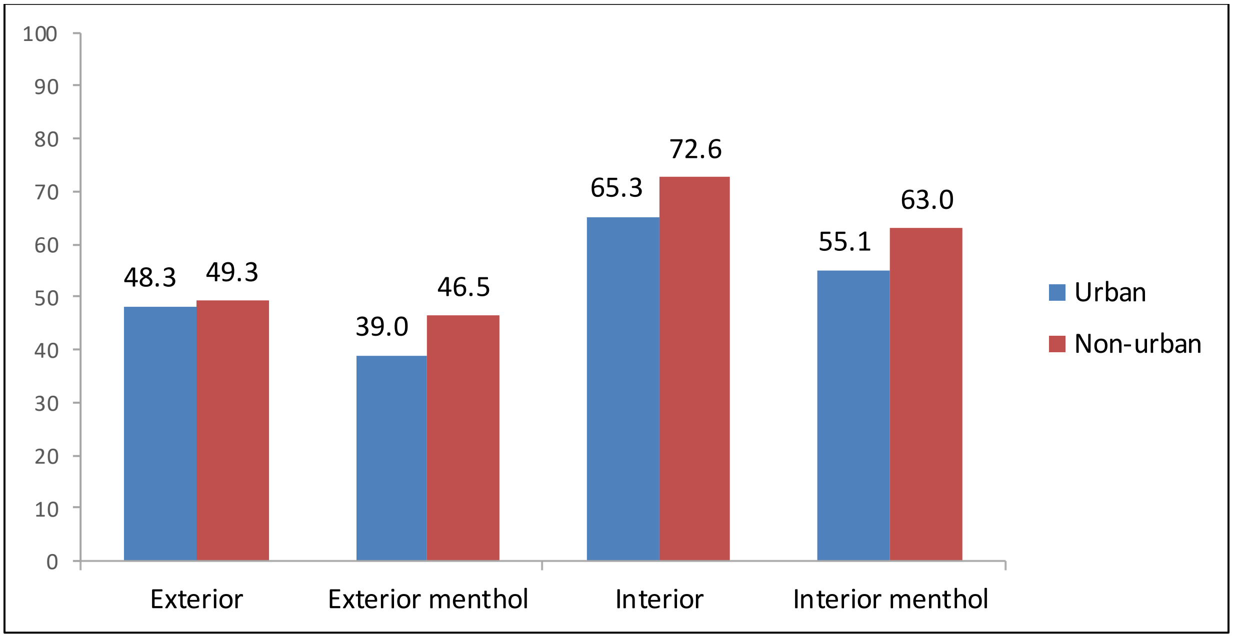
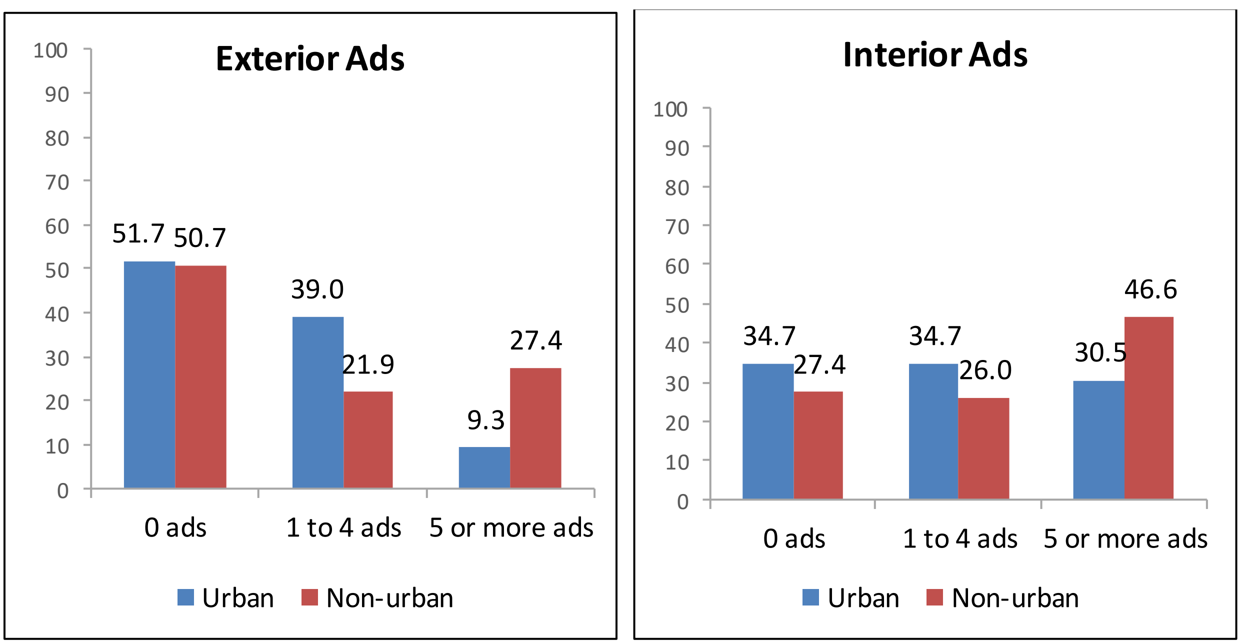


Figure 5. Number of exterior and interior cigarette ads in urban (n=118) and non-urban (n=73) stores, %



Cigars/cigarillos

Cigar products, including large cigars and cigarillos, were the second most commonly sold tobacco product in stores aside from cigarettes. As shown in Table 5, 87.4% of all stores carried cigars and nearly all of those stores offered flavored varieties (83.8%). Cigar availability was highest in convenience stores (both chain and non-chain), followed by drug stores and liquor stores.

Table 5. Cigar/cigarillo availability by store type

Store type	Cigar availability %	Flavored cigar availability %
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	93.1	90.8
Liquor store (n=31)	83.9	77.4
Convenience, chain (n=28)	96.4	96.4
Drug store (n=15)	86.7	86.7
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	76.9	53.8
Other (n=11))	45.5	45.5
Dollar store (n=6)	83.3	83.3
Overall (n=191)	**87.4**	**83.8**

Next to cigarettes, cigars were the most commonly advertised tobacco product in stores. Cigar advertisements, however, were substantially less common than cigarette ads. Only 18.3% of stores had at least one exterior cigar ad and 24.1% displayed at least one interior cigar ad (Table 6). Prevalence of cigar advertising was generally highest in chain convenience stores, especially the interior. The vast majority of stores that advertised cigars had only 1 or 2 ads (data not in table). Interestingly, although 86.7% of drug stores carried cigars, none advertised these products.

Table 6. Presence of cigar/cigarillo ads by store type

Store type	Exterior ads %	Interior ads %
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	23.0	23.0
Liquor store (n=31)	6.5	22.6
Convenience, chain (n=28)	28.6	57.1
Drug store (n=15)	0.0	0.0
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	15.4	0.0
Other (n=11))	18.2	18.2
Dollar store (n=6)	16.7	16.7
Overall (n=191)	**18.3**	**24.1**

A comparison of urban and non-urban stores revealed that exterior and interior cigar advertisements were more prevalent in non-urban stores (Figure 8). Non-urban stores were almost three times more likely than urban stores to have exterior cigar advertising. Exterior ads for *flavored* cigars/cigarillos, however, were slightly more common in urban stores. Despite heavier advertising in non-urban stores, the availability of cigars and flavored cigars was higher in urban stores (Figure 9).

Figure 6. Presence of cigar ads in urban (n=118) and non-urban (n=73) stores, %

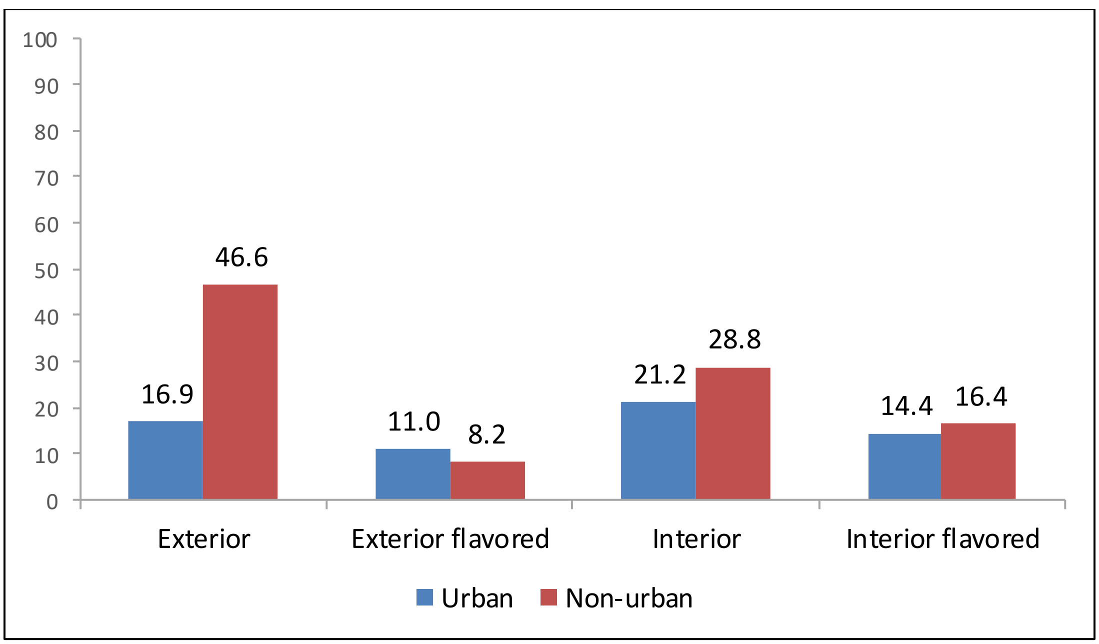
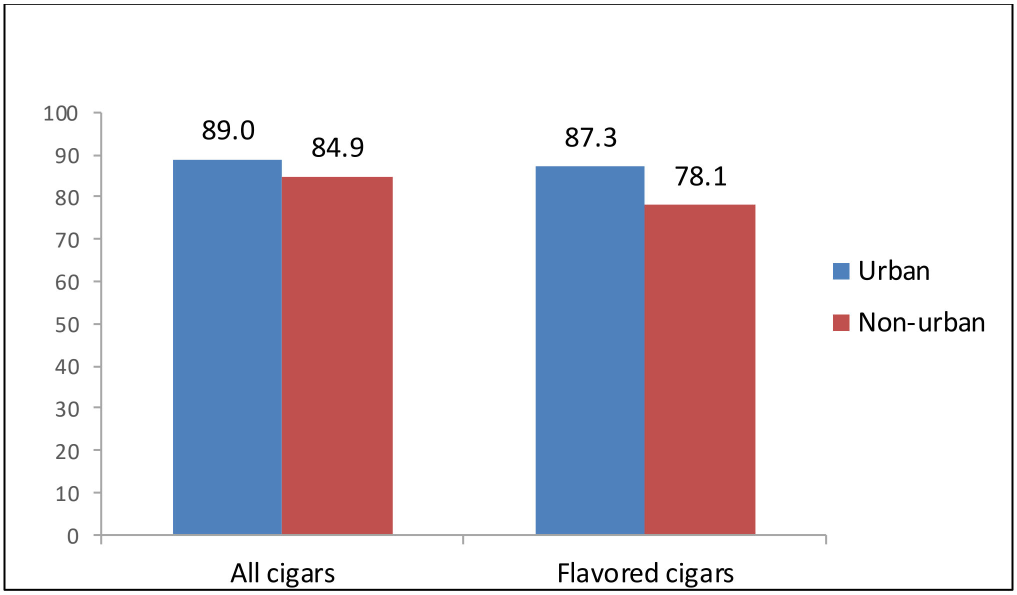


Figure 7. Cigar and flavored cigar availability in urban (n=118) and non-urban (n=73) stores, %



Smokeless Tobacco

Moist snuff smokeless tobacco (also called "dip") was sold in 22% of all stores in the sample but was more common in chain convenience stores. Snus, a Swedish type of moist-snuff that is sold in teabag-like pouches, was available 11% of stores, the majority of which were chain convenience stores (Table 7).

Table 7. Smokeless tobacco availability by store type

Store type	**Moist snuff availability** %	**Snus availability** %
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	14.9	3.4
Liquor store (n=31)	9.7	3.2
Convenience, chain (n=28)	78.6	57.1
Drug store (n=15)	13.3	6.7
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	15.4	0.0
Other (n=11))	0.0	0.0
Dollar store (n=6)	0.0	0.0
Overall (n=191)	**22.0**	**11.0**

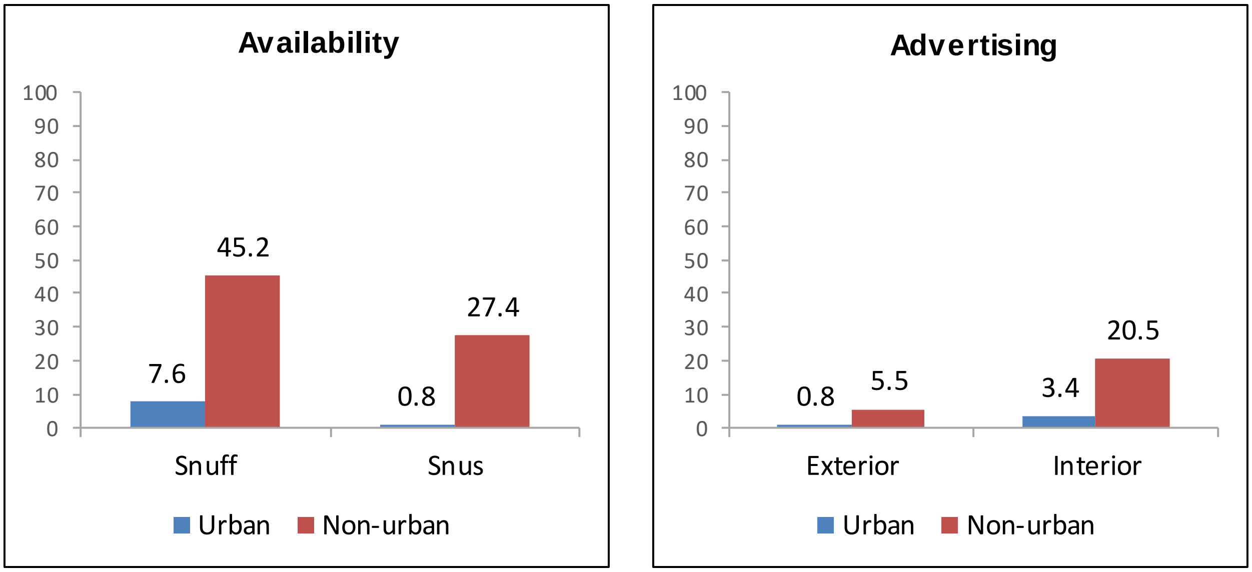
Table 8 presents the prevalence of smokeless tobacco advertising by store type. Overall, exterior ads for smokeless tobacco were uncommon (2.6% of stores), but the prevalence was relatively high among gas station kiosks (7.7%) and chain convenience stores (7.1%). Interior ads were more common (9.9% of all stores) and most prevalent in chain convenience stores (60.7%). The overwhelming majority of stores with smokeless tobacco advertising only displayed one or two ads (data not in table).

Table 8. Smokeless tobacco advertising by store type

Store type	Exterior ads %	Interior ads %
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	2.3	2.3
Liquor store (n=31)	0.0	0.0
Convenience, chain (n=28)	7.1	60.7
Drug store (n=15)	0.0	0.0
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	7.7	0.0
Other (n=11))	0.0	0.0
Dollar store (n=6)	0.0	0.0
Overall (n=191)	**2.6**	**9.9**

Both exterior and interior smokeless tobacco ads were extremely uncommon in urban stores. For example, only one urban store in the sample had any exterior ads for smokeless tobacco. Likewise, both moist snuff and snus were substantially more available in non-urban compared to urban stores. Close to half (45.2%) of non-urban stores sold moist snuff and 27.4% sold snus. Conversely, less than 8% of urban stores sold either of these products (Figure 10).

Figure 8. Advertising and availability of smokeless tobacco in urban (n=118) and non-urban (n=73) stores, %



E-cigarettes

Almost half of all stores audited sold e-cigarettes (44%) (see Table 9). Slightly more than a third (38.2%) sold flavored varieties of e-cigarettes, such as fruit flavors. The sale of e-cigarettes was most common in drug stores (86.7%) and chain convenience stores (89.3%). Only 29.9% of non-chain convenience stores offered e-cigarettes. Similarly, "open tank" e-cigarettes, which allow users to add their own e-liquid to the devices, were available in nearly a quarter of stores (22%), but were more frequently seen in drug stores and chain convenience stores. Unlike cigarettes, e-cigarettes do not have to be sold behind the counter. In 12% of stores, e-cigarettes were displayed in a counter display stand near the cash register. Exactly one quarter of chain convenience stores showcased e-cigarettes in this manner.

Table 9. Availability of e-cigarettes and presence of counter display stands by store type

Store type	E-cig availability %	Flavored e-cig availability %	"Open tank" availability %	Counter display stand %
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	29.9	23.0	13.8	9.2
Liquor store (n=31)	22.6	16.1	3.2	9.7
Convenience, chain (n=28)	89.3	85.7	50.0	25.0
Drug store (n=15)	86.7	86.7	53.3	0.0
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	15.4	15.4	7.7	0.0
Other (n=11)	63.6	45.5	45.5	36.4
Dollar store (n=6)	66.7	66.7	16.7	16.7
Overall (n=191)	**44.0**	**38.2**	**22.0**	**12.0**

In both 2015 and 2016, e-cigarettes were the second most advertised tobacco product next to cigarettes, but in 2017, prevalence of e-cigarette advertising dropped below cigars (Table 10). Under 20% of all stores had either exterior or interior e-cigarette ads. Of these, less than half of the advertisements were for flavored e-cigarettes. Interestingly, most drug stores carried e-cigarette products, but few displayed any e-cigarette advertisements (6.7%). Mirroring trends in availability, chain convenience stores frequently had e-cigarette advertisements. Most stores with e-cigarette advertising only had one or two ads (data not in table).

Table 10. Presence of e-cigarette advertising by store type

Store type	Exterior ads %	Exterior flavored ads %	Interior ads %	Interior flavored ads %
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	12.6	4.6	13.8	5.7
Liquor store (n=31)	6.5	3.2	6.5	3.2
Convenience, chain (n=28)	32.1	3.6	53.6	28.6
Drug store (n=15)	0.0	0.0	6.7	0.0
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	7.7	7.7	0.0	0.0
Other (n=11)	9.1	0.0	9.1	9.1
Dollar store (n=6)	16.7	19.7	16.7	16.7
Overall (n=191)	**13.1**	**4.2**	**16.8**	**8.4**

E-cigarette advertising was much more prominent in non-urban stores (Figure 11). The prevalence of exterior e-cigarette advertising in non-urban stores (24.7%) was more than four times in urban stores (5.9%). Interior e-cigarette advertising in non-urban stores (27.4%) was over two and a half times more prevalent than in urban stores (10.2%). Additionally, the availability of e-cigarette products was substantially greater in non-urban stores. Less than a third of urban stores sold any type of e-cigarette, compared to 64.4% of non-urban stores (Figure 12).

Figure 9. Presence of e-cigarette ads in urban (n=118) and non-urban (n=73) stores, %

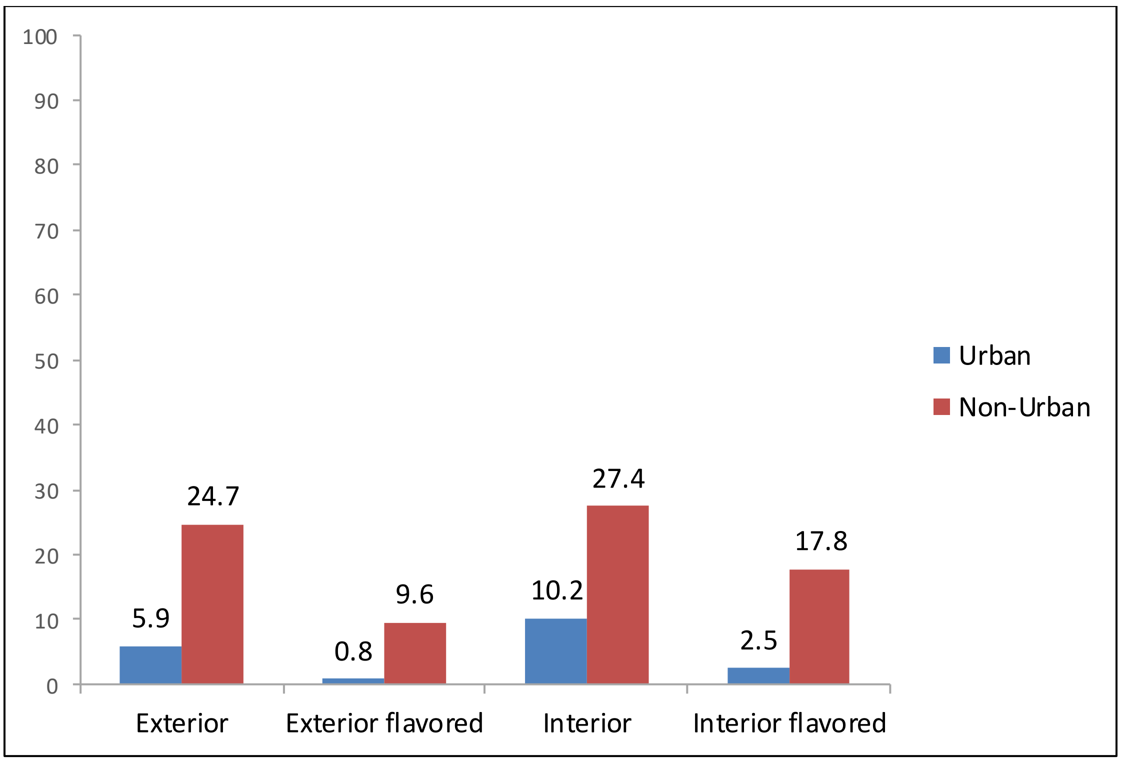
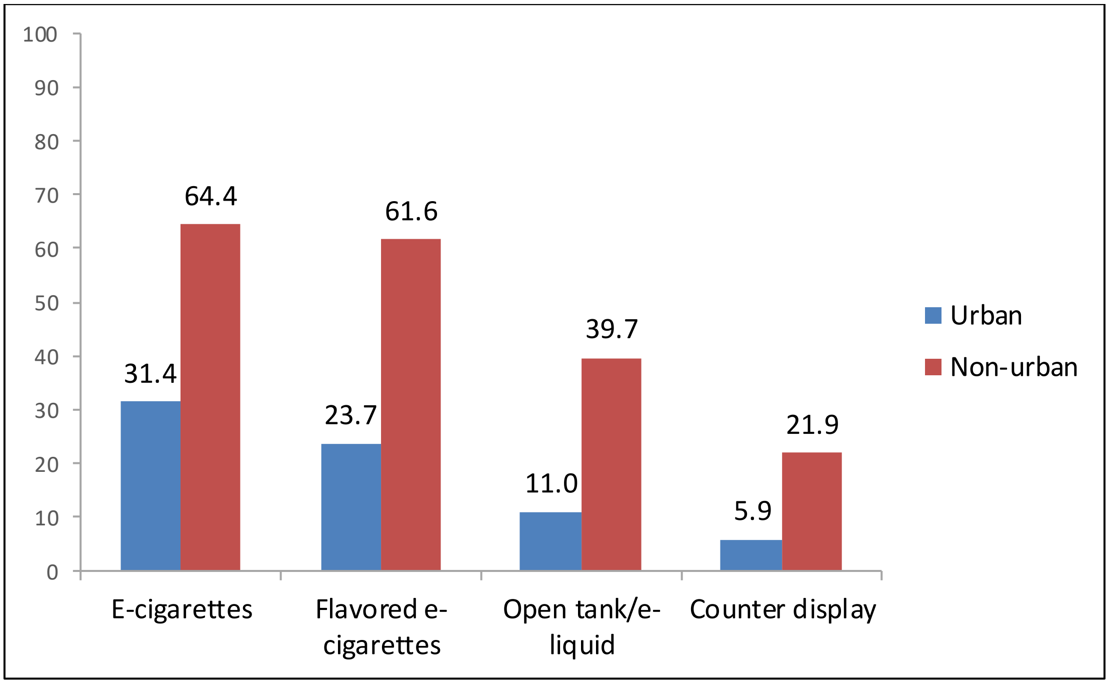


Figure 10. E-cigarette availability and presence of counter display stands in urban (n=118) and non-urban (n=73) stores, %



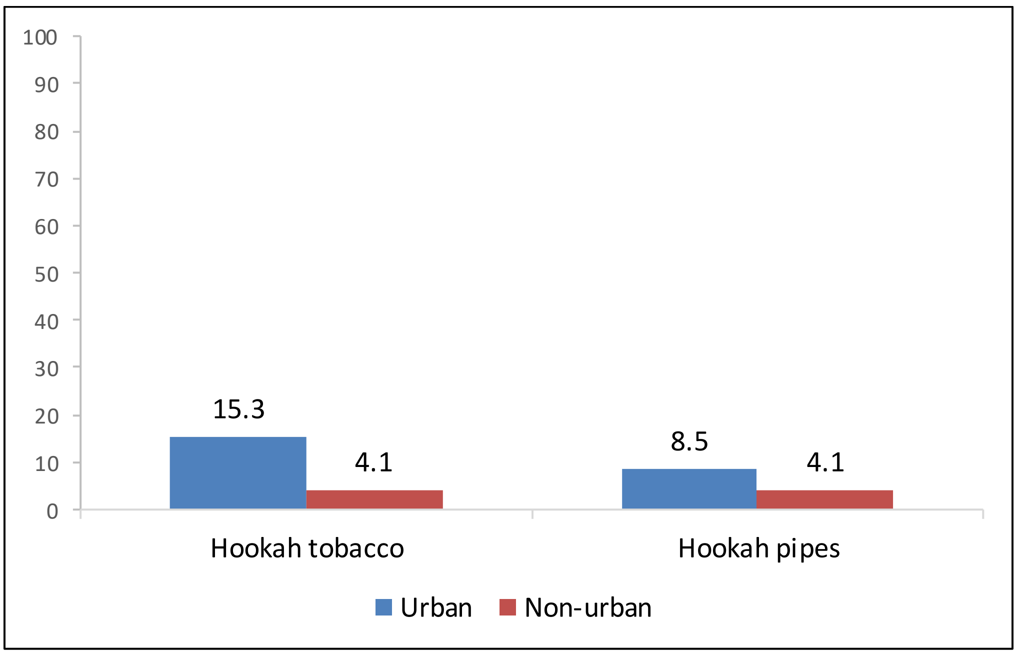
Hookah

Hookah tobacco was available in 11% of all stores, while hookah pipes were available in 6.8% of all stores (see Table 11). Other stores, which included specialty tobacco stores, had the highest percentages of hookah tobacco and pipe availability (27.3%). Non-chain convenience stores were more than twice as likely to carry hookah tobacco as chain convenience stores. Figure 13 illustrates the differences in hookah tobacco and hookah pipe availability in urban and non-urban stores. Hookah tobacco and pipes were substantially more available in urban stores than non-urban stores. Although some stores that sold hookah tobacco and pipes displayed signage that they carried these products, POS advertising from hookah manufacturers was non-existent.

Table 11. Hookah tobacco and hookah pipe availability by store type

Store type	Hookah tobacco availability %	Hookah pipe availability %
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	14.9	6.9
Liquor store (n=31)	9.7	6.5
Convenience, chain (n=28)	7.1	7.1
Drug store (n=15)	0.0	0.0
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	0.0	0.0
Other (n=11))	27.3	27.3
Dollar store (n=6)	0.0	0
Overall (n=191)	**11.0**	**6.8**

Figure 13. Hookah tobacco and hookah pipe availability in urban (n=118) and non-urban (n=73) stores, %

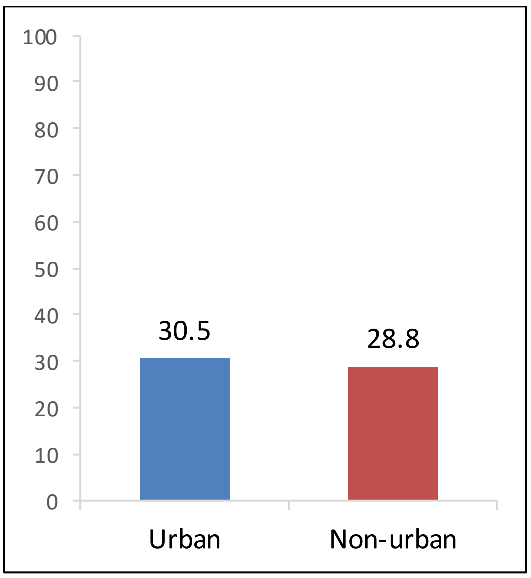


Roll-your-own

Roll-your-own (RYO) tobacco was available in almost a third of the stores (see Table 12). Over half of all drug stores sold RYO tobacco, while gas station kiosks were the only store type to not sell it. There was little difference in RYO tobacco availability between urban and non-urban stores (see Figure 14).

Table 12. Roll-your-own tobacco availability by store type	
	Roll your own tobacco availability
Store type	%
Convenience, non-chain (n=87)	33.3
Liquor store (n=31)	12.9
Convenience, chain (n=28)	39.3
Drug store (n=15)	53.3
Gas station, kiosk only (n=13)	0.0
Other (n=11))	36.4
Dollar store (n=6)	16.7
Overall (n=191)	**29.8**

Figure 14. Roll-your-own availability in urban (n=118) and non-urban (n=73) stores, %



Changes in product advertising, 2015-2017

A total of 171 stores were successfully audited in 2015, 2016 and 2017. Table 11 highlights changes in the prevalence of product advertising over these years. Although exterior advertising for cigarettes decreased, interior ads increased in 2017 after a decline in 2016. There were notable increases in interior advertising of cigar/cigarillo products. Nearly a quarter of the stores in this sample had interior cigar advertisements in 2017, a 68.5% increase from 2015. While exterior flavored cigar advertisements remained unchanged, interior advertising increased 147% from 2015 to 2017. The prevalence of smokeless advertising remained relatively unchanged with the exception of a 136% increase in the prevalence of interior flavored smokeless tobacco advertisements. E-cigarettes were the only products for which advertising substantially decreased between 2015 and 2017. The prevalence of exterior and interior e-cig advertising decreased by over 50%.

Table 11. Changes in the prevalence of product advertising, 2015-2017 (n=171)

	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	Percentage point change 15’ vs. 17’
Cigarettes				
Exterior cigarette ads	56.1	53.8	50.9	-5.2
Exterior menthol cigarette ads	44.4	45.0	43.3	-1.1
Interior cigarette ads	64.9	64.3	70.8	5.9
Interior Menthol cigarette ads	54.4	52.6	60.2	5.8
Cigars				
Exterior cigar ads	12.5	17.9	18.1	5.6
Exterior flavored cigar ads	9.4	9.4	9.4	0.0
Interior cigar ads	14.6	24.0	24.6	10.0
Interior flavored cigar ads	6.4	14.0	15.8	9.4
Smokeless tobacco				
Exterior smokeless ads	3.6	3.5	2.9	-0.7
Exterior flavored smokeless ads	2.9	2.3	2.9	0.0
Interior smokeless ads	10.5	12.3	11.1	0.6
Interior flavored smokeless ads	4.7	9.9	11.1	6.4
E-cigarettes				
Exterior e-cig ads	31.6	19.9	15.5	-16.1
Exterior flavored e-cig ads	7.6	5.3	4.7	-2.9
Interior e-cig ads	33.9	25.7	17.0	-16.9
Interior flavored e-cig ads	11.7	9.9	8.2	-3.5

Changes in product availability, 2015-2017

Table 12 displays changes in product availability between 2015, 2016 and 2017. Cigarettes were almost universally available across years. Availability of cigars/cigarillos, moist snuff, and snus increased from 2015 to 2017 (5.3% and 5.9%, respectively). Mirroring trends in product advertising, e-cigarette availability decreased by 23% from 2015 to 2017. Likewise, during the same time period, e-cigarette counter displays decreased by 61%.

Table 12. Changes in product availability, 2015-2017 (n=171)

Product type	2015 %	2016 %	2017 %	Percentage point change 15' vs. 17'
Cigarettes	98.8	98.8	97.6	-1.2
Cigars	83.6	89.4	88.9	5.3
Flavored cigars	81.3	86.0	85.4	4.1
Moist snuff	20.5	17.0	23.4	2.9
Snus	6.4	8.8	12.3	5.9
E-cigarettes	57.9	47.4	44.4	-13.5
Flavored e-cigarettes	42.7	34.5	38.0	-4.7
"Open tank" e-cigarettes	22.2	22.8	21.6	-0.6
E-cigarette counter display	24.0	17.5	9.4	-14.6

SUMMARY

Over 60% of the high schools participating in the 2014 New Jersey Youth Tobacco Survey had at least one tobacco retailer in a half-mile radius. Cigarettes were by far the most available and advertised tobacco product across all stores in the sample. Furthermore, over a third of stores had a *high number* of cigarette ads (i.e., 5 or more). Cigars and cigarillos were also widely available but were more likely to be found in urban stores. Similarly, hookah tobacco and pipes were available in more urban stores than non-urban stores. Conversely, smokeless tobacco and e-cigarettes were harder to find in urban stores compared to non-urban stores.

The notable difference in cigarette promotion between urban and non-urban stores was the higher *number* of both exterior and interior ads in non-urban stores. Advertising *prevalence* for other tobacco products, such as cigars/cigarillos, smokeless tobacco, and e-cigarettes, was substantially greater in non-urban stores. This is likely a function of the types of stores dominate urban versus non-urban school districts. For example, the stores around non-urban schools were more likely to be chain convenience stores which were found to have a high prevalence of non-cigarette tobacco product advertising. On the contrary, stores near urban schools were more likely to be “mom and pop” stores or bodegas, which do not heavily advertise non-cigarette tobacco products.

Between 2015 and 2017, the promotion and availability of cigars and cigarillos has increased among stores in the sample, but the data suggest that retailers may be reducing their promotion of e-cigarettes. It will be important to monitor whether changes in the tobacco retail environment will mirror changes in youth tobacco use behaviors as reflected in the New Jersey Youth Tobacco Survey.

This report provides important data about the accessibility and promotion of various tobacco products near high schools. During a time when cigarette smoking rates are declining among youth, it is critical to conduct surveillance on how other tobacco products are being marketed in areas where youth spend time. The heavy promotion of cigars, cigarillos, and e-cigarettes is particularly concerning. Unsurprisingly, these are three of the most common tobacco products among youth in New Jersey. Future surveillance efforts should monitor how tobacco product promotion changes over time and should collect data from other retail locations where youth spend time, such as stores near parks and residential neighborhoods. Moreover, research should examine the relationship between exposure to tobacco advertising in the retail setting and use behaviors among youth.

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