

Thursday, 23 June, 2022

## Local businesses caught selling illegal cigarettes

Tobacco retailers in South Eastern Sydney are being warned that if they sell illegal cigarettes and/or display tobacco and e-cigarettes products and accessories in view of the public they are breaking the law and can expect to face hefty fines.

The warning comes after a tobacconist in Bondi Junction was fined \$12,000 in the Waverley Court this week after pleading guilty to multiple charges of selling tobacco without a health warning and openly displaying e-cigarettes and smoking accessories.

Dr Vicky Sheppard, Director, Public Health Unit, South Eastern Sydney Local Health District said the harmful effects of tobacco are proven.

“The government introduced public policies including plain packaging and health warnings in an attempt to minimise harm,” Dr Sheppard said.

“Despite long efforts to educate and remind retailers of the penalties they could face if caught selling illegal cigarettes, it is worrying that people are still able to buy these products from some shops.”

The magistrate noted the seriousness of the offences and said the fines should act as a deterrent and send a strong message to all tobacco retailers.

Under the *Public Health (Tobacco) Act 2008*, it is an offence to sell cigarettes unless the packet in which they are sold is marked with a health warning. It is also illegal to allow tobacco and e-cigarette products and accessories to be seen by the public. The maximum penalty for each of these offences is \$11,000 for an individual and \$55,000 in the case of a corporation.

Members of the community can help reduce the harm caused by smoking cigarettes by reporting possible breaches of the law to the Public Health Unit on 02 9382 8333 or to the Tobacco Information Line on 1800 357 412. All complaints will be dealt with confidentially.

For help quitting smoking, visit [icanquit.com.au](http://icanquit.com.au) or call the Quitline on 13 78 48.

NSW Health has seized more than \$1 million worth of illegal e-cigarettes and liquids containing nicotine since January 2022.

The seizures so far this year bring the total amount of illegal product seized since 1 July 2020 to more than \$3 million.

NSW Health is committed to reducing the prevalence of e-cigarette and tobacco use, and in 2021-22 has invested \$18.3 million towards tobacco and e-cigarette control.