

# **Lowell Tobacco Control Report**

## **January of 2021**

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**Program Director**

### **Lowell**

#### **Inspections**

I completed 33 in-store inspections this month. As explained below, a new guidance issued by the Massachusetts Tobacco Cessation and Prevention Program (MTCP) has created confusion among retailers about the manufacturers' letters. Most of my time in stores was spent answering their questions about these letters.

#### **Implementation of the new state law: An Act Modernizing Tobacco Control**

MTCP has issued new guidance to tobacco retailers regarding the requirements contained in 105 CMR 665.010 that retailers must obtain letters from the manufacturers before selling tobacco products. The letters are supposed to certify that the products they sell are not flavored and the nicotine content of their electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) don't exceed 35mg/ml. Although the intent was to clarify issues pertaining to the letters, it has created more confusion because many of the letters provided to them by their distributors don't meet the specifications included in the new guidance. I've reported my findings to my contract manager.

#### **Compliance Checks**

Given the significant increase in the number of COVID-19 cases across the state, particularly in Lowell and Lawrence, it is uncertain when we will be resuming compliance checks.

#### **Tobacco Permit Renewal**

The following 5 establishments haven't completed renewal of their tobacco permits yet:

Infante Grocery, 198 Broadway  
Infante Grocery II, 326 Moody St  
Family Dollar, 1665 Middlesex St  
Family Dollar, 21 Nottingham St  
The 99 Store, 180 Liberty St

Mill City Tobacco stopped selling tobacco products, including ENDS. The manager informed me he's currently selling his stock of non-tobacco products and will closed the store permanently after he finishes that. The following are establishments that are still in business, but chose to stop selling tobacco products:

Bayon Market, 37 Branch St  
P & D Mart. 1717 Middlesex St  
Olive Tree, 1270 Westford St

All these above-mentioned stores were inspected this month to ensure they're not selling tobacco products.