

# The Smoke-Free Ontario Act bans all displays of tobacco products including power walls as of May 31, 2008

The Smoke-Free Ontario Act is designed to protect the health of all Ontarians by prohibiting smoking in all enclosed workplaces and enclosed public places in Ontario as of May 31, 2006. The legislation also strengthens laws on tobacco sales to minors and restricts the display of tobacco products in retail outlets.

The Act is part of the provincial government's comprehensive tobacco control plan to prevent young people from starting to smoke, to assist people who want to quit smoking and to protect workers and the public from exposure to second-hand smoke.



Tobacco companies spend \$101 million a year promoting their products in displays like this.

**Will this child buy it?**

## What are power walls?

- Power walls are huge displays of tobacco products seen behind the counter in convenience stores.

## Why should you be concerned about power walls?

- Prominent retail displays are the most important category of tobacco industry marketing expenditure today. In 2005, tobacco manufacturers paid \$101 million to retailers for such displays. With restrictions on other types of advertising and promotion, retail displays have become an increasingly crucial part of the tobacco industry's marketing strategy.

Power walls allow the tobacco companies to promote their products in the place where consumers make purchases. Displays stimulate sales.

Power walls are visible to the entire population, including children, non-smokers and recent ex-smokers. They are very effective advertising tools because they reach everyone, especially children and youth who are the tobacco industry's new customers. Tobacco products are often displayed at low eye levels adjacent to candy.

Power walls have a variety of effects on people. They are known to stimulate impulse buying and to weaken the resolve of ex-smokers to remain smoke-free. Just one purchase can turn an ex-smoker back into a daily smoker.

Despite the addictiveness of tobacco, more than 60% of tobacco purchases are impulse buys.

## What effect do power walls have on children?

Power walls give a false impression that smoking is more common than it actually is and more socially acceptable.

Power walls in almost every convenience store, supermarket and gas station contribute to youth believing that 'everyone' smokes. Research shows that the more youth overestimate the popularity of smoking, the more likely they are to become smokers.