

Tobacco Prevention and Control Program

Position Statement on Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS)

Electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS) or electronic cigarettes are devices that produce an aerosol by heating a liquid which usually contains nicotine, flavorings, and other additives. They come in a variety of shapes and sizes but most have a battery, a heating element and a place to hold the liquid. ENDS are fairly new and the long-term health effects are unknown. What is known, is the significance of tobacco use on health, the intensity of nicotine addiction, and the historical behavior of the tobacco industry which prompts a cautious approach to these products. Awareness and usage of ENDS has exponentially increased during the last few years, especially among young people. The rapid acceptance of ENDS may be attributed in part to the perception created by marketing and the popular press that they are safer than combustible cigarettes.

The North Dakota Department of Health, Tobacco Prevention and Control Program, has the following position on ENDS:

- The health risks of ENDS have not been adequately studied.
- Nicotine from ENDS is highly variable and unregulated.
- In addition to nicotine, most ENDS products contain and emit potentially toxic substances.
- Intentional or accidental exposure to e-liquids (from drinking, eye contact, or dermal contact) can result in adverse health effects including, but not limited to, seizures, anoxic brain injury, vomiting, and lactic acidosis. Intentionally or unintentionally drinking or injecting e-liquids can be fatal.
- ENDS use increases airborne particulate matter and nicotine in indoor environments. This secondhand smoke/vapor contains harmful chemicals which places non-users at risk for adverse health effects.
- ENDS can explode, causing burns and projectile injuries.
- Safety and health claims regarding ENDS should be subject to evidentiary review.
- ENDS are not currently approved by the FDA as a quit smoking aid.