

Discounted cigarette advertising disgraceful, says Coalition

Smokefree Coalition media release

8 June 2009

The Smokefree Coalition says stores should be investigated for selling heavily discounted cigarettes and may be in breach of the Smoke-free Environments Act.

Director Mark Peck said it was disgraceful that some stores in Timaru have lowered the price of cigarettes by as much as a dollar a pack, and were advertising the cheaper prices with signs.

“Nobody with any understanding has any illusions about whether or not this dangerous product will kill half its users. That’s why cigarettes aren’t supposed to be cheap. The more expensive they are the less likely it is that people will smoke. It’s also why advertising them with anything bigger than a business card sized label is illegal.

“Cigarette promotion is clearly against the law.”

Mr Peck said the Coalition has referred the promotion to the Ministry of Health and the Regional Public Health Unit in Timaru and asked for a full investigation. He said he would also encourage the Ministry to investigate whether the tobacco industry is involved.

“If this happens with impunity in Timaru, rest assured we’ll see more of it in other parts of the country. That’s why we’re encouraging the Ministry to prosecute to the full extent any breach of the law that may have occurred.”

-Ends

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