

Illegal Tobacco: what YOU should know!



ORGANIZED CRIME AFFECTS YOU EVERYDAY, BOTH SOCIALLY AND FINANCIALLY.

Be aware when tobacco products are sold through untraditional vendors :

- on the street or in a parking lot;
- offered tax-free on the Internet; or
- at unreasonably low prices

The tobacco products are probably smuggled, manufactured illegally or counterfeit.

You think illegal tobacco products are a good deal?

THINK AGAIN!

Several laws (the *Excise Act, 2001*, the *Tobacco Act* and some provincial Acts) govern the sale or possession of tobacco products. Under these laws, whether federal or provincial, the consequences of dealing in illegal tobacco products are serious.

Offenders are liable to substantial fines, confiscation of their property and a prison term of up to five years.



The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, in partnership with other law enforcement and government agencies, is working to put a stop to this activity.

If you have questions about illegal tobacco products, witness illegal transactions, or believe that you are a victim of unfair competition, contact the RCMP or your local police service of jurisdiction.

Web site: www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca

All information provided will be treated confidentially.

Did you know that?

The sale of illegal tobacco products often benefits criminal organizations.

The profits are used to:

- finance drug trafficking in Canada;
- purchase illegal weapons; and
- fund other illicit activities.

These activities affect the safety and security of our communities and our children.

Effects on our society...

Buying and selling illegal tobacco has other negative consequences for Canadian society:

- erodes respect for the law and minimizes the serious consequences of this type of criminal activity;
- federal and provincial governments lose millions in tax revenue, money that could fund social programs, education, employment programs and health care;

- increases the tax burden for taxpayers;
- prevents legitimate businesses from carrying out their activities in a climate of fair competition; and
- encourages young people to take up smoking through unrestricted access to inexpensive cigarettes.

How can I identify illegal tobacco products?

- Under the *Excise Act, 2001*, a label or tear strip must appear on packages of cigarettes and pouches of tobacco indicating that the manufacturer has paid the relevant duties.
- The manufacturer's name and address, or the manufacturer's permit number must also appear on the package.
- If you purchase tobacco products that are not marked as required by law, you are in possession of illegal products.
- Cigarettes sold in unstamped cartons, resealable plastic bags or which do not display Health Canada warnings on the package.



ILLEGAL TOBACCO
— the consequences