

# Tobacco in Mesa County

Tobacco product is defined in Colorado Statute as "Any product that contains nicotine or tobacco or is derived from tobacco and is intended to be ingested or inhaled by or applied to the skin of an individual." This includes traditional tobacco products such as cigarettes, smokeless tobacco like chew, and electronic vapor products. Tobacco continues to be the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, killing a half million people each year. Attitudes about and access to tobacco products impact youth initiation, quit rates, and secondhand smoke exposure. Tobacco use is a community concern that is most effectively impacted by a community response.

## Key Takeaways

### Traditional Tobacco Use

- A higher percent of adults still smoke cigarettes in Mesa County compared with the state.
- More adult and high school males use smokeless tobacco products compared with the state.
- Mesa County has seen a decrease in pregnant women who report smoking during pregnancy (a trend also seen at the state level).
- In 2017, chronic lower respiratory disease and other diseases of the respiratory system were two of the top ten causes of death in Mesa County.

### Vaping

- Electronic vapor products are the second most commonly used substance by high school students.
- Most high school students think vaping is not harmful.
- Youth who vape are four times more likely to smoke cigarettes.

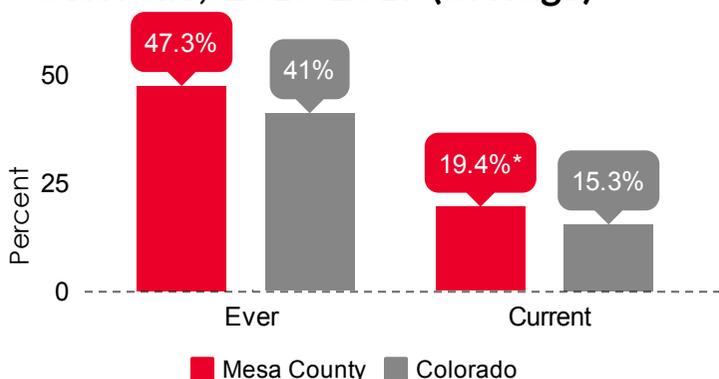
### Tobacco Policy

- Most Mesa County students are getting vape products from the Internet or an unspecified source, such as peers.
- Colorado has one of the lowest taxes on cigarettes.
- Nicotine vape products are not taxed in Colorado.

## Traditional Tobacco Use

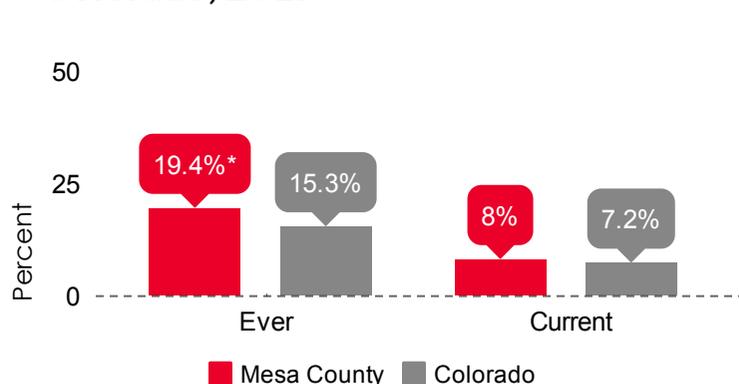
Traditional tobacco products include cigarettes, smokeless tobacco like chew, and cigars. These traditional products kill up to half of their lifetime users. Cigarettes contain approximately 70 cancer-causing chemicals. Smoking harms nearly every organ in the body and causes cancer, heart disease, stroke, lung diseases, diabetes, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Smoking can also make chronic medical conditions worse. Smokeless tobacco products contain 28 cancer-causing chemicals that have been shown to increase the risk of oral cancer and contain more nicotine than cigarettes. One can of chew is equivalent to three packs of cigarettes.

**Percent of Adults Who Use Cigarettes in Mesa County and Colorado, 2015-2017 (average)**



\*Significantly higher than the state

**Percent of High School Students Who Use Cigarettes in Mesa County and Colorado, 2017**



Only **3** in **4** Mesa County high school students (76%) think youth cigarette use is wrong.\*

\*Significantly worse than the state (82%)

### Death rates:

**Chronic lower respiratory disease, 2017**

**56.5 per 100,000**

Colorado: 44.8 per 100,000  
Such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

**Lung and bronchus cancer 2013-2015**

**41.4 per 100,000\***

\*Significantly higher than the state (28.5 per 100,000)

## Percent of Women Smoking During Pregnancy

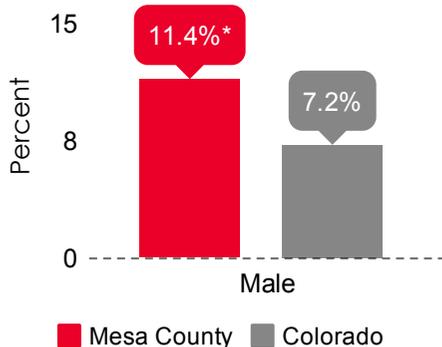


**3 in 10 women (31%) smoked during pregnancy, 2004-2008 (average)**  
Compared to 2 in 10 women (20%) in Colorado.



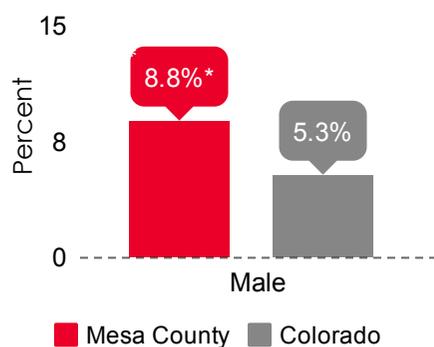
**Approximately 1 in 10 women (8%) smoked during pregnancy, 2014-2016 (average)**  
Compared to 6% of women in Colorado.

## Percent of Adults Who Use Smokeless Tobacco in Mesa County and Colorado, 2015-2017 (average)



\*Significantly higher than the state.  
Charts include males only, as men are the primary users of smokeless tobacco

## Percent of High School Students Who Use Smokeless Tobacco in Mesa County and Colorado, 2017

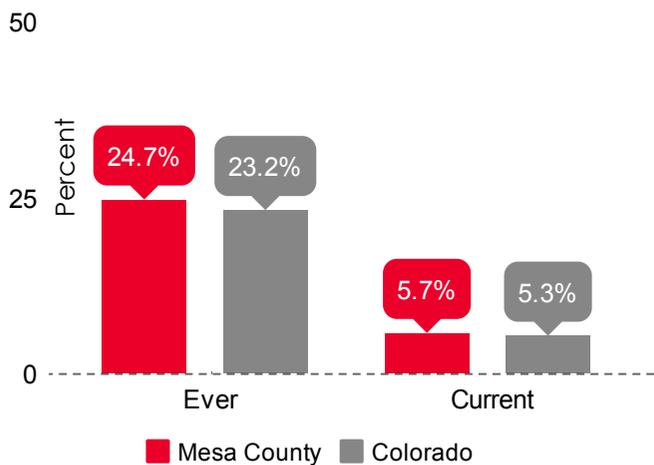


# Vaping

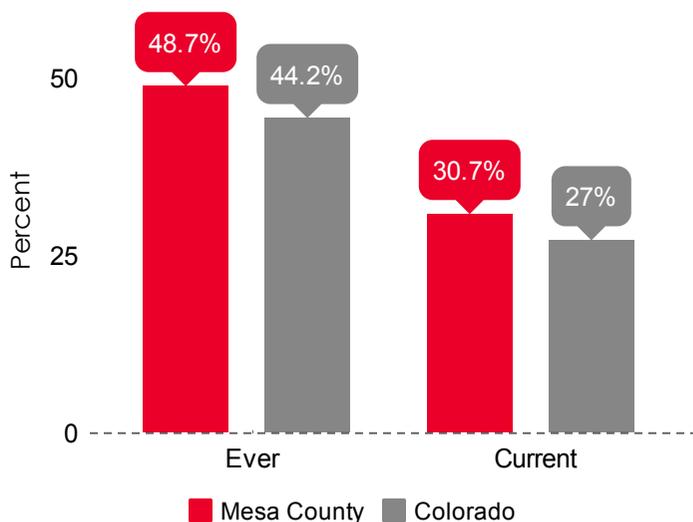
- Many names for electronic vaping products exist, including e-cigarettes, vaporizers, vape pens, mods, tanks, JUULS, and electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS).
- Youth who use vape products may be more likely to use traditional tobacco products.
- Vaping devices are becoming more discreet (e.g. being incorporated into the drawstrings of hoodies) and do not have the same strong odor as traditional products.
- Vape devices are not approved as cessation devices by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).
- No standard regulations exist for vape manufacturers for product design, ingredients, or safety features.

Visit [healthymesacounty.org](http://healthymesacounty.org) for tips on talking to youth about vaping.

## Percent of Adults Who Vape in Mesa County and Colorado, 2016-2017 (average)



## Percent of High School Students Who Vape in Mesa County and Colorado, 2017

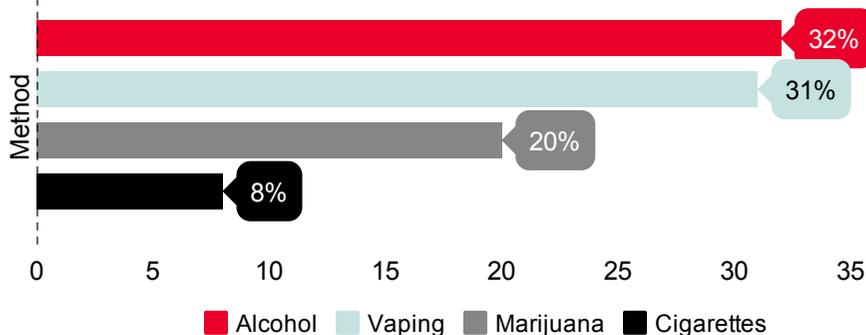


Only **45%**

of Mesa County high school students think vape products are harmful.\*

\*Significantly fewer Mesa County students think vaping is harmful when compared to the state (50%) and compared to the perceived harm of traditional cigarettes (88%)

## Reported Current Substance Use by High School Students in Mesa County, 2017



Similar to Colorado high school students.

# Tobacco Policy

The benefits of tobacco control policies include:

- Reducing
  - Youth initiation.
  - Tobacco consumption.
  - The number of people using tobacco.
- Increasing the number of tobacco users who quit.
- Supporting smokers trying to quit smoking.

## Tobacco Control Act (H.R. 1256)

Prohibits:

- Sales to minors.
- Vending machine sales, except in adult-only facilities.
- Sale of packages of fewer than 20 cigarettes (i.e. a pack of cigarettes).
- Free giveaways of sample cigarettes and brand-name non-tobacco promotional items.

Requires:

- Tobacco products and advertisements to include a health warning statement.
- Checking photo ID of everyone younger than age 27 who attempts to purchase tobacco products.

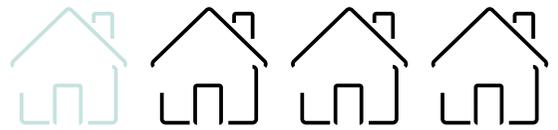
### Tobacco Retailers

Compliance checks for sales to minors and other federal regulations are conducted by the FDA and Colorado Department of Revenue.

180

tobacco retailers operate in Mesa County.  
1.2 retailers per 1,000 population.

1.1 per 1,000 in Colorado.



1 in 4 retailers are within 500 feet of a youth-serving place.\*

\*Includes child care facilities, schools, parks, community centers, and malls



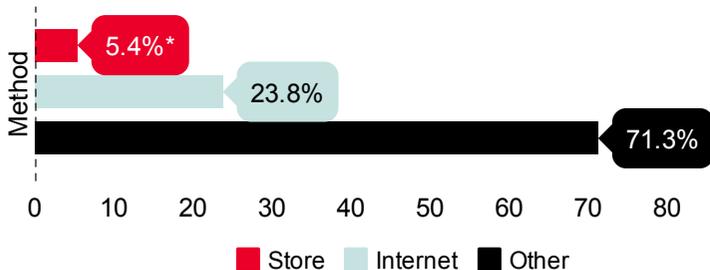
Nearly 1 in 5 retailers in Mesa County sold a tobacco product to a minor during a compliance check in 2018.

56%

of high school students who smoke cigarettes bought them from a gas station, convenience store, grocery store, or drugstore.

Compared to 51% of Colorado high school students

### Reported Method of Getting Vape Product by High School Students in Mesa County, 2017



\*Significantly lower than the state (24%)

\*\*The leading thought is that "other" is friends, family, and peers



6 in 10 high school students (60%) think it would be easy or very easy to get cigarettes\* or vapor products if they wanted.

\*Significantly higher than the state (55.5%)

## Colorado Clean Indoor Air Act (C.R.S. 25-14)

Prohibits smoking in any indoor area of public places and buildings including:

- Restaurants and bars,
- Retail and commercial establishments,
- Common areas of multiple-unit residential facilities,
- Public and private schools, and
- Places of employment larger than 3 employees.

Places excluded from the law, include:

- Private homes and residences,
- Private automobiles, except when used for public transportation of children or health care,
- A maximum of 25% of rooms at a hotel or motel, and
- Cigar-tobacco bars.

Prohibits smoking within a 15-foot radius outside main or front doorway of any establishment, unless otherwise defined by local law.

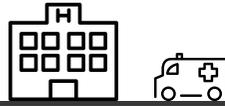
## Local Smoke-Free Parks

- City of Grand Junction
- Mesa County
- Fruita - Vape-free too



## Local Tobacco-Free Hospitals

- St. Mary's Medical Center
- Community Hospital
- Family Health West



## Tobacco-Free Schools

- Prohibits any tobacco use on school property by students, staff and the public.
- Tobacco use includes smoking, chewing, and vaping.
- Prohibits student possession of any nicotine or tobacco-containing product.
- No student shall be expelled solely for tobacco use.

## Colorado Tobacco Tax

Amendment 35, approved by Colorado voters in 2004, increased taxes on cigarettes and other tobacco products. One-third of the revenue is allocated to tobacco prevention and treatment.

<h3>Colorado Cigarette Tax</h3> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>\$0.84</b></p> <p>per pack</p> </div>	<h3>Average State Cigarette Tax</h3> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p><b>\$1.72</b></p> <p>per pack</p> </div>	<h3>Snuff, Chewing Tobacco and Cigar tax</h3> <p>40% of the manufacturing price</p> <hr/> <h3>Nicotine Vape Products</h3> <p>None</p>
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Colorado has the **39th lowest** tax on cigarettes in the United States.

## Community Efforts

<h3>Cessation</h3> <p>Connecting residents with resources to help them quit tobacco.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Colorado QuitLine at 1-800-QUITNOW</li> </ul>	<h3>Prevention</h3> <p>Educating policy-makers, youth, retailers, and the public about the harms of tobacco.</p>	<h3>Policy</h3> <p>Developing, supporting and enforcing local, state and national tobacco policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoke-Free Indoor</li> <li>• Smoke-Free Outdoor</li> <li>• Tobacco Retailer Licensing</li> <li>• Tobacco Price</li> </ul>
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<h3 style="text-align: center;">Recommendations</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support Tobacco Free Schools through youth, staff and parent education, consistently enforcing the policy, and providing cessation services to tobacco users.</li> <li>• Increase public awareness and utilization of evidence-based tobacco cessation services through the health neighborhoods (e.g. medical practices, human service agencies).</li> <li>• Develop and support state and local policies to reduce youth access and exposure to secondhand smoke.</li> <li>• Educate about tobacco price as effective tobacco prevention and control.</li> </ul>		
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## Community Partners

- Primary Care Partners
- School District 51
- Community Hospital
- Fruita Youth Initiative
- St. Mary's Medical Center
- Hilltop
- Marillac

## Sources

- Healthy Kids Colorado Survey, 2017
- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS)
- Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System
- Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids
- Tobacco Retailer Access Colorado (TRAC)
- Federal Drug Administration (FDA)

Thank you to the partners that participated in the Mesa County Tobacco-Focused Community Assessment: City of Grand Junction, City of Fruita, Grand Junction Housing Authority, School District 51, Community Hospital, St. Mary's Medical Center, Mesa County Administration, Futures Learning Center, and Colorado Mesa University.