

UCSF to receive tobacco papers, funding to improve public access to the documents

December 13 2011

The U.S. Department of Justice filed a proposed consent order today with a federal district court that finalizes requirements for three major tobacco companies to make internal documents public in accordance with an earlier ruling that the companies violated the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act. The documents will be archived in UCSF's Legacy Tobacco Documents Library (LTDL).

The order, once approved by the court, will be part of the remedy phase of the largest civil racketeering case in the history of the United States

The order specifies that the companies provide \$6.25 million to the court to improve free public access to the [documents](#) via the internet. The court will provide this money to the UCSF Legacy Library for this purpose.

The order also specifies how the companies are to index the documents.

The UCSF Legacy Library (<http://legacy.library.ucsf.edu>), first launched in 2000 with a major gift from the Washington DC-based American Legacy Foundation, now has 13.7 million documents (79 million pages) released as a result of litigation against the major tobacco companies related to their advertising, manufacturing, marketing, sales, political, public relations and scientific activities.

An earlier order by Federal Judge Gladys Kessler, filed in U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia in Washington, D.C., requires the

tobacco companies to continue to release documents through 2021. The Legacy Library has been growing by about 700,000 documents in each of the past three years.

Each month, the Legacy Library is used by an average of 16,000 [academic researchers](#), tobacco control advocates, lawyers, journalists and students internationally who view an average of 227,000 pages. Last year, visitors came from 190 different countries to use it. Close to 600 peer-reviewed journal articles and 130 other publications including government reports, books and newspaper articles based on research at the library have been published. The new funds will allow all of that information to be digitized for early access online.

"These funds will allow us to substantially improve the way investigators, the media and the public are able to research how tobacco companies produce, price and market their products as well as protect their political interests globally," said Kim Klausner, UCSF Industry Documents Digital Library Manager.

Sam Hawgood, MBBS, dean of the UCSF School of Medicine and vice chancellor for medical affairs said the university is "gratified that the court recognizes the important contributions that UCSF has made, and will continue to make, to global public health through the Legacy Tobacco Documents Library. Making these documents freely available to everyone is an important element of UCSF's contribution as a public university," he said.

The defendant [tobacco companies](#) that agreed to the proposed court order are Philip Morris USA, Inc, Altria Group, and RJ Reynolds Tobacco Company. The proposed consent order is subject to court approval and is not final until it is signed and entered by the [court](#).

"Research based on the documents has provided a unique insight into

how the tobacco industry manipulates scientific and political processes and engineers its products and marketing to maximize its sales," said Stanton A. Glantz, PhD, UCSF professor of medicine and director of the Center for [Tobacco](#) Control Research and Education at UCSF. "By revealing the industry's behind-the-scenes strategies and involvement, this understanding has transformed public health from city councils to the United Nations."

Provided by University of California, San Francisco

Citation: UCSF to receive tobacco papers, funding to improve public access to the documents (2011, December 13) retrieved 28 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-12-ucsf-tobacco-papers-funding-access.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.