

In Canada, each cigarette will get a warning label: 'poison in every puff'

May 31 2023, by Rob Gillies



This image provided by Health Canada shows the final wording of six separate warnings that will be printed directly on individual cigarettes as Canada becomes

the first in the world to take that step aimed at helping people quit the habit. The regulations take effect Aug. 1 and will be phased in. King-size cigarettes will be the first to feature the warnings and will be sold in stores by the end of July 2024, followed by regular-size cigarettes, and little cigars with tipping paper and tubes by the end of April 2025. Credit: Health Canada/The Canadian Press via AP

Canada will soon become the first country in the world where warning labels must appear on individual cigarettes.

The move was first announced last year by Health Canada and is aimed at helping people quit the habit. The regulations take effect Aug. 1 and will be phased in. King-size cigarettes will be the first to feature the warnings and will be sold in stores by the end of July 2024, followed by regular-size cigarettes, and little cigars with tipping paper and tubes by the end of April 2025.

"This bold step will make health warning messages virtually unavoidable," Mental Health and Addictions Minister Carolyn Bennett said Wednesday.

The warnings—in English and French—include "poison in every puff," "tobacco smoke harms children" and "cigarettes cause impotence."

Health Canada said the strategy aims to reduce tobacco use below 5% by 2035. New regulations also strengthen health-related graphic images displayed on packages of tobacco.

Bennett's statement said tobacco use kills 48,000 Canadians every year.

Doug Roth, chief executive of the Heart & Stroke charity, said the bold

measure will ensure that dangers to lung health cannot be missed.

The Canadian Cancer Society said the measure will reduce smoking and the appeal of cigarettes, thus preventing cancer and other diseases.

Rob Cunningham, senior policy analyst at the Canadian Cancer Society, said health messaging will be conveyed in every puff and during every smoke break. Canada, he added, will have the best tobacco health warning system in the world.

Tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship are banned in Canada and warnings on cigarette packs have existed since 1972.

In 2001, Canada became the first country to require tobacco companies to include picture warnings on the outside of cigarette packages and include inserts with health messages.

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