

**CONSUMER AFFAIRS RELEASES LIST OF "DIRTY DEALERS"  
WHO HAVE HAD THEIR TOBACCO LICENSE REVOKED  
FOR SELLING REPEATEDLY TO KIDS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Business Compliance at Record High 85% Citywide**

New York City Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Gretchen Dykstra today released a list of 128 "Dirty Dealers" that had their tobacco license revoked from October 2003 through May 2004 for selling repeatedly to kids. Of the 128 revocations, 53 were in Brooklyn, 35 were in Manhattan, 20 were in the Bronx, 18 were in Queens, and two were in Staten Island. Retailers caught selling cigarettes to anyone under the age of 18 twice within two years are required to pay hefty City and State fines. Commissioner Dykstra was joined at the announcement by teens participating in DCA's undercover tobacco prevention program, members of Reality Check, a statewide initiative focused on youth-to-youth advocacy against the tobacco industry, and representatives from anti-tobacco organizations.

"Selling cigarettes to kids is terrible for their health and dangerous to your business," said DCA Commissioner Gretchen Dykstra. "Business compliance is at an all-time high of 85%, due in large part to DCA's tough enforcement, but there's still more work to do. New York City has the best teen tobacco enforcement program in the country and the message is clear: If you sell to kids, it'll cost you big fines and your license."

In addition to licensing approximately 12,000 tobacco retailers in New York City, the DCA runs the Teen Tobacco and Prevention Program where approximately 70 teens, ages 14-17, working with agency inspectors go undercover to curb illegal sales to minors. Accompanied by a DCA inspector, teens conduct routine inspections all year long in all five boroughs, by going into stores and attempting to purchase cigarettes. If they are not asked for identification, the vendor is cited by DCA. City fines are \$1,000 for the first offense and \$2,000 for the second, plus license revocation. State fines are a maximum of \$1,000 for the first offense and \$1,500 for each thereafter, plus possible license revocation. (DCA's Teen Tobacco Enforcement Program is made possible by a New York State grant administered by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene).

Since the program formally began in 1998, compliance among City businesses has increased by more than 30%. Prior to the start of the program, a DCA survey in 1993 showed 85% of businesses inspected sold to kids.

In fiscal year 2004 (July 1, 2003 - June 30, 2004), the DCA conducted 14,588 inspections citywide, an increase of 2,000 from fiscal year 2003. Currently, Queens has the highest compliance rate of all five boroughs at 89%, followed by Brooklyn at 86%, the Bronx at 85%, Staten Island at 84% and Manhattan at 84%.

"We commend the Department of Consumer Affairs for its tough and effective enforcement of illegal cigarette sales to kids," said Joanne Koldare, Director, NYC Coalition For A Smoke Free City. "Continuous enforcement, especially at the local level, is essential to keeping businesses accountable and lowering teen smoking rates."

"Cracking down on stores who sell cigarettes to kids is an important part in the City's comprehensive approach to reducing youth smoking in New York City. These programs have begun to work, but there are still approximately 25,000 New York City kids who get hooked on cigarettes every year which is why it is so important to maintain these efforts so we can continue to see these great results year after year," said William V. Corr, Executive Director of the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids.

The DCA Teen Prevention and Enforcement Program pays \$7.25 an hour (plus MetroCards). On average students can work 20-25 hours per week with flexibility, as inspections are conducted every day. Those participating are also required to take a no-smoking pledge.

DCA enforces the New York City Consumer Protection Law, as well as other related laws, at thousands of businesses throughout New York City. DCA licenses more than 60,000 businesses in 55 different categories and educates both consumers and businesses alike through free community seminars, licensing forums, and other informational materials.

For more information or to file a complaint, call 3-1-1, or visit the DCA web site at [www.nyc.gov/consumers](http://www.nyc.gov/consumers)