

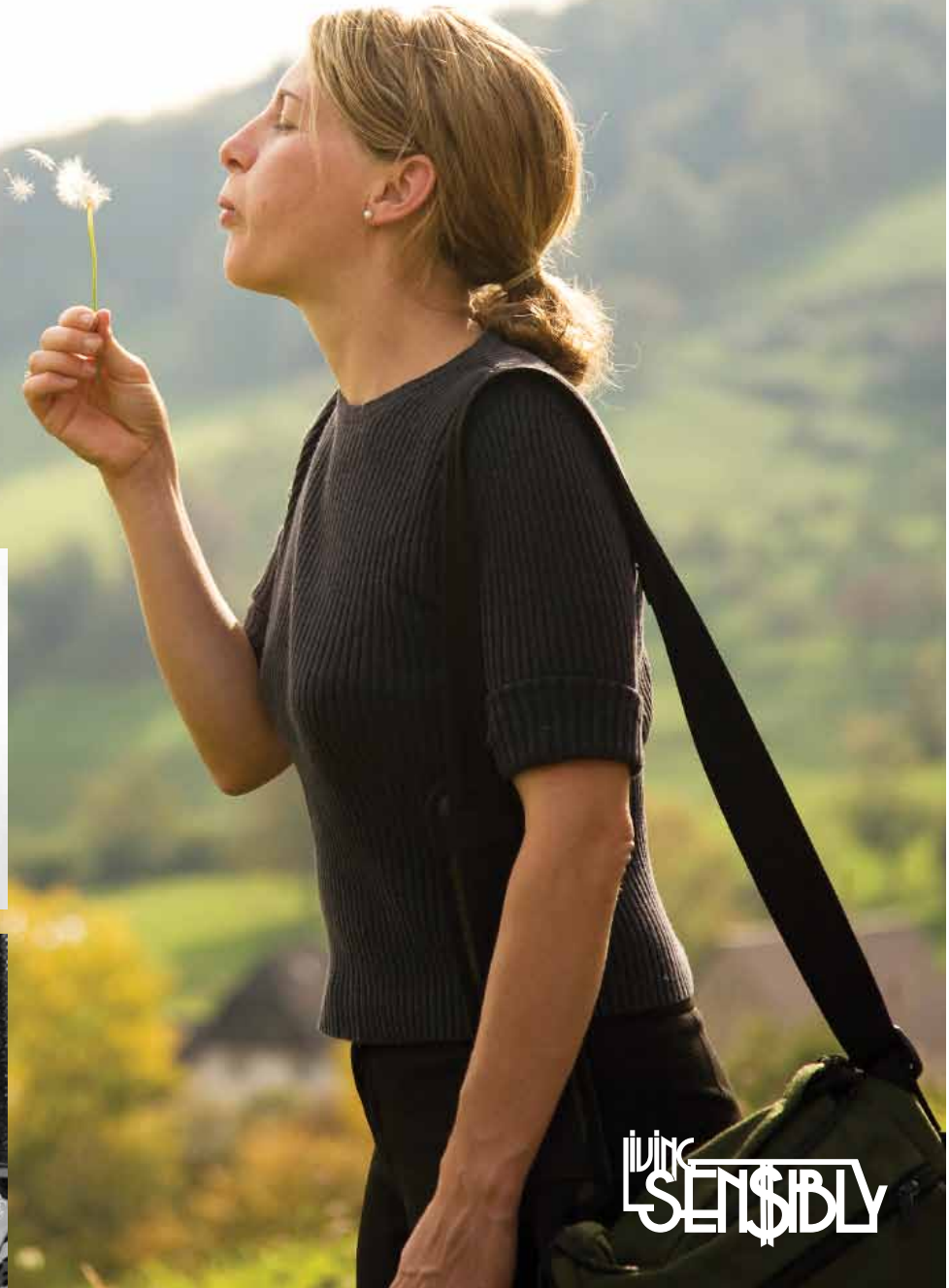
CONTRABAND TOBACCO



Supporting the contraband tobacco business means the odds are good teen smoking rates are going to rise, and with it the future cost of dealing with the social, economic, and health impacts.

“Contraband tobacco.” The words are music to the ears of many smokers. For them, buying cheap smokes has become a way to continue smoking without breaking the bank – and who can blame them? After all, contraband tobacco costs much less than tobacco sold by the mainstream tobacco companies. Who wouldn’t want to save money? Many contraband buyers see their actions as a victimless action. After all, nobody’s getting hurt except the taxman. But is that really true?

There are more things to consider when buying that bag of ‘whites’ or a package of ‘DKs’ than just beating the taxman. You might also want to consider the effect of your purchase on the local economy. Consider the effect on your local convenience store. Economic times are tough for many in our community and local convenience stores get hurt twice when you buy contraband. For many smaller stores the



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difference between 'making it' or 'breaking it' is the traffic generated by cigarette sales. Indeed, they may not make much on the cigarettes you pick up, but when you also pick up that jug of milk, loaf of bread or a snack to satisfy your sweet tooth, you help them to earn a living.

Contraband tobacco is also finding its way into the hands of Canadian youth who are too young to buy legal smokes from convenience stores. Studies have shown that the higher the price of cigarettes, the fewer teens start smoking. Most smokers don't buy cigarettes for teens; most are honest enough to say it's a bad habit that kids shouldn't start. But smugglers don't care who buys their smokes as long as they have the cash. Supporting the contraband business means the odds are good our teen smoking rates could rise, and with it the future cost of treating both the social, economic and health impact.

What is Contraband Tobacco?

Contraband tobacco is divided into two categories: counterfeit cigarettes and untaxed native cigarettes. Counterfeit cigarettes are cigarettes that are packaged to resemble popular mainstream brands primarily by outlaw manufacturers in China. The packages are virtually identical to the real thing except for a few identification cues offshore manufacturers haven't been able to duplicate yet.

Untaxed native cigarettes make up most of the contraband in Canada, and the overwhelming majority of it comes in from aboriginal tobacco factories on the Akwesasne Reserve in New



York State. In either case, your purchase of contraband means that millions of dollars are leaving the country. If you're still working in these harsh economic times when companies are increasingly using cheaper producers offshore, it might pay to remember that somebody else may not be working as a result of your buying decision.

REFERENCES
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