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Director

**COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE  
COMMUNITY HEALTH AGENCY  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**County to Crack Down on Unlicensed Tobacco Vendors**

Riverside County Public Health officials announced today a crackdown beginning April 17, 2006 on unlicensed tobacco retailers in the unincorporated areas of the County and in the city of Corona. "The Board of Supervisors passed a strict tobacco retail licensing ordinance 7 months ago and currently only fifty per cent of merchants have complied," comments Susan Harrington, Riverside County's Director of Public Health. "We have sent out letters notifying all merchants of the licensing requirement on two different occasions in addition to press releases." The intent of the ordinance is to identify and regulate all merchants who sell tobacco and reduce the high sales to minor's rate in Riverside County.

Merchants who are caught selling tobacco or tobacco paraphernalia without a license will be cited, fined and have their tobacco products seized by the Department of Public Health according to Robert Peterson, the Tobacco Retail Licensing Program Coordinator.

The current ordinance covers the County unincorporated areas and the city of Corona and Norco. Norco will have a grace period since the ordinance only became effective on April 1, 2006. As other cities are added to the program, they will be given a similar period of time to comply prior to any action being taken. The goal of the Program is that all 24 cities in the County will adopt the Tobacco Licensing Ordinance and Riverside County will have a uniform regulation of tobacco.

Merchants who are not licensed may call the Health Department at (951) 358-7157 to request a license application or if they have additional questions regarding the Ordinance.

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