



Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

Decision on Printing Health Warnings on Cigarette Packets and Cartons



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Ministry of Health
Inter-Ministerial Coordinated Committee
On Cigarette Control

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Foreword

This decision on printing health warnings on cigarette packets and cartons is composed of 6 Parts and 15 Articles with all detailed guidelines in the implementation of the printing of health warnings on cigarette packets and cartons to all tobacco manufacturing factories and industries of both domestic and imported tobacco products.

Based on the results of scientific research of the World Health Organization, the number of cigarette smokers reaches 1,100 million people or is equivalent to one third of the world population. 80% are people with medium and low incomes. Around 5 million people die from cigarette smoking annually or one of every ten deaths comes from cigarette smoking. There is a death every 10 seconds. It is expected that the number of deaths will reach 10 million people in 2030. 50% of cigarette smokers will die from diseases related to tobacco, half of them will die pre-maturely. Most cigarette smokers began smoking at a young age (8 out of 10 began smoking before reaching 20 years of age).

In the Lao PDR, the Ministry of Health has the estimated number of the rate of cigarette smoking in different groups of people as follows: in urban areas 25% of men smoke and in rural areas up to 60% of men smoke. While 1.5 % of women in urban areas smoke, the number of women who smoke covers as many as 30% of total women in rural areas. Among those cigarette smokers 70%-90% are from minority ethnic groups.

From the above mentioned data, the warnings printed on cigarette packets and cartons is one of the effective methods that aims to provide information related to the danger of cigarette smoking to health and to reduce cigarette consumption. According to the World Health Organization (WHO)'s report, warnings printed on cigarette packets is one of the effective methods that can help reduce the cigarette consumption rate, especially among the groups of people with middle levels of education.

The warnings of the danger of cigarette smoking to health are mentioned in Part IV, entitled Introduction Policy No. 5 of the Tobacco Control Policy in the Lao PDR, dated 23 March 2001, and mentioned in Part III, Article No. 11 of the Decision on Cigarette Control of The WHO adopted by the Government of the Lao PDR, dated 29

June 2004 and was signed to ratify the treaty on 05 September 2006 and was declared in force by the President of the Lao PDR on 07 September 2006.

This Decision on the Printing of Warnings on Cigarette Packets and Cartons has been discussed and approved by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Cigarette Control and the Ministry of Health.

The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Cigarette Control is composed of: the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Industry and Trade, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of National Defense, the Ministry of Information and Culture, the Ministry of Justice, Mass Organizations, WHO and ADRA Laos.

The Ministry of Health, as the main institution responsible for The Inter-Ministerial Committee on Cigarette Control, thanks all concerned parties for their support and contributions to this Decision. At the same time, it requests all concerned parties to work together in implementing this Decision, aiming at enhancing the quality of life as well as protecting the health of Lao people in all ethnic groups from diseases caused by cigarette smoking and smoke.

Vientiane Capital, 23 May 2006
Minister of Ministry of Health:

Decision on Printing of Health Warnings on Cigarette Packets and Cartons

- Pursuant to the Law on Hygiene and Diseases Prevention and Health Promotion No. 01/NA, dated 10 April 2001,
- Pursuant to the Prime Minister’s Decree on the Establishment and Functioning of the Ministry of Health No. 020/PM, dated 19 March 1999,
- Pursuant to the Recommendation Letter No. 620/DHDP, dated 26 August 2005, submitted by the Department of Hygiene and Disease Prevention.

Minister of Health Issues the Decision:

Part I General Principles

Article 1: Missions and Visions

1: Missions

This Decision aims:

- To determine principles, regulations and measures in controlling and inspecting the printing of health warnings on cigarette packets and cartons.
- To provide medical and scientific information on cigarette smoking and the exposure to cigarette smoke, especially on the diseases caused by cigarette smoking and smoke.

2: Visions

Every cigarette packet and carton whether it is produced domestically or is imported, must have health warnings.

Article 2: Definitions.

1. Health warnings on cigarette packets and cartons refers to the advertising message printed on cigarette packets and cartons to warn cigarette consumers of the dangers and negative impacts of the products on their personal health and that of others.
2. “Tobacco product” means the product that is made from tobacco leaves, which can be a part or all of the main raw materials and is used as a product for smoking, sucking, chewing and sniffing.

3. “Tobacco industry” means cigarette manufacturers, cigarette importers and cigarette sales agents.

Section II

Control on the Printing of Warnings

Article 3: Control on the Printing of Warnings

Cigarettes, whether produced domestically or imported, must have health warning messages printed in the Lao language. Those warnings must be printed on the top of the front and back sides of the cigarette packets and on the 2 sides of the cigarette cartons.

Article 4: Designing Health Warnings

Labels and health warnings in Article 3 aforementioned of this regulation must follow the following designing instructions:

1. They must cover 30% of the displayed areas on the front and back of the cigarette packet and on both sides of the cigarette cartons, including the bordering frame of the labels.
2. The bordering frame of the labels must be in white with 2 mm width.
3. The background of the labels must be black with white letters.
4. The warning messages must be printed in Bold Saysettha Lao font.
5. The contents of the warnings printed on the cigarette packets and cartons must be composed of:
 - **Cigarette smoke causes lung cancer**
 - **Cigarette smoking causes death from heart attack**
 - **Cigarette smoking causes rupture of brain blood vessels**
 - **Cigarette smoking causes sexual impotence**
 - **Cigarette smoke kills surrounding people**
 - **Cigarette smoking causes black teeth and bad mouth odor**

Article 5: Size of Letters Used for Printing the Warnings

The size of letters used for printing the health warnings must be appropriate and suited to the size of the cigarette packets or cartons as specified as follows:

1. If the cigarette packet has front and back side areas of less than 37 cm², the font size of printed letters must be 20.
2. If the cigarette packet has the front and back side areas of more than 37 cm² but less than 80 cm², the font size must be 25.

3. If the cigarette packet has front and back side areas more than 80 cm², the font size must be 38.
4. For cartons of those cigarette packets, the font size must be 45.

Article 6: Expiration of the Printing

Each type of health warning text printed on cigarette packets and cartons expires 2 years from the date it is printed.

Article 7: Prohibitions

1. All tobacco industries are prohibited from misusing words that can lead to misunderstanding of the quality of tobacco, such as: “Low tar”, or “light”, or “ultra-light”, or “mild”.
2. All tobacco industries are prohibited from printing any messages related to health without obtaining the approval of concerned tobacco controlling institutions.
3. All tobacco industries, individuals or entities are prohibited from producing, importing and selling tobacco products without health warnings.
4. All tobacco industries are prohibited from persuading, promoting or inserting valuable materials (money, lucky draw ticket) inside the cigarette packets and cartons because they will induce higher consumption.

Chapter III

Obligations in Printing the Warnings

Article 8: Obligations

The tobacco industries that are legally established in the Lao PDR shall fulfill the following obligations:

1. Must print the warnings about health effects on their cigarette packs and cartons produced domestically or imported by them based on the content and designs specified in Article 4, Article 5 and Article 6 of this regulation.
2. Administer and monitor the printing of those warnings on their respective tobacco products.
3. Warnings printed on the cigarette packets and cartons shall be changed every two years based on the content and designs provided by the Ministry of Public Health in each period.

Chapter IV

Administration and Inspection of the Printing of Warnings

Article 9: Administration and Inspection Agencies of the Printing of Warnings.

Administration and Inspection Agencies of the Printing of Health Warnings is composed of:

1. National level: Department of Hygiene and Disease Prevention, Ministry of Health.
2. Local level:
 - Hygiene and Disease Prevention Divisions, Departments of Health of Provinces and Vientiane Capital
 - Hygiene and Disease Prevention Units, Health Offices of Districts

Article 10: Rights and Responsibilities of the Printing of Warnings Administration and Inspection Agency at the National Level

Under the direction of the Minister of Health and in cooperation with the Inter-Ministerial Tobacco Control Committee, the administration and inspection agency on the printing of warnings at the national level has the following rights and responsibilities:

1. Study and define the contents of health warnings that reflect the real situation and in accordance with scientific principle in each period.
2. Encourage, monitor and inspect the tobacco industries (tobacco factories, tobacco importers and distributors) to make sure that they implement this regulation strictly and effectively.
3. Consider and make recommendations to the upper ranking authority in rewarding compliance or penalizing for violations to tobacco industries on case by case basis.
4. Fulfill other rights and responsibilities as delegated.

Article 11: Rights and Responsibilities of the Printing Warnings Administration and Inspections Agencies at the Local Level

Under the direction of the National Administration and Inspection Agency for the Printing of Warnings and with the approval of the directors of the Health Departments of the provinces and Vientiane Capital, the Printing of Warnings Administration and Inspection Agencies at the local level have the following rights and responsibilities:

1. Monitor and inspect the printing of health warnings on cigarette packets and cartons at shops and places that sell and distribute tobacco products within their respective local jurisdiction.
2. Cooperate with other relevant agencies to take action against the violators as specified in Article 13 of this regulation.
3. Report, on the vertical line, the situation of the printing of health warnings and related issues.
4. Fulfill other responsibilities as delegated.

Chapter V

Rewarding for Compliance and Penalties for Violation

Article 12: Rewards

All tobacco industries that adhere strictly to this regulation shall be rewarded and praised accordingly by their respective authority.

Article 13: Measures Against the Violators

All tobacco industries, individuals or entities that violate Article 3, Article 4, Article 5, Article 6 and Article 7 of this regulation shall be penalized with the following measures:

First time: being warned and educated and providing a written pledge that they will not violate the regulation again.

Second time: being fined in the amount equal to six times the sales price of tobacco products in the market and based on the quantity specified in official bills of delivery or the actual quantity of the products found.

Third time: being fined four times the amount equal to six times the sales price of tobacco products in the market and based on the quantity specified in official bills of delivery or the actual quantity of the products found.

Fourth time: being proposed to the authority to temporarily or permanently withdraw the license of the violated industry on a case by case basis and, based on the severity of the violation, being fined in an amount equal to six times the sales price of tobacco products on the market and based on the quantity specified in official bills of delivery or the actual quantity of the products found.

Chapter VI

Implementation Arrangement

Article 14: Implementation

The Department of Hygiene and Disease Prevention of the Ministry of Health and the Inter-Ministry Coordination Committee for Tobacco Control shall carefully interpret and implement this regulation in cooperation with the Health Departments of the provinces and Vientiane Capital and other relevant agencies across the countries.

Article 15: Effective Date

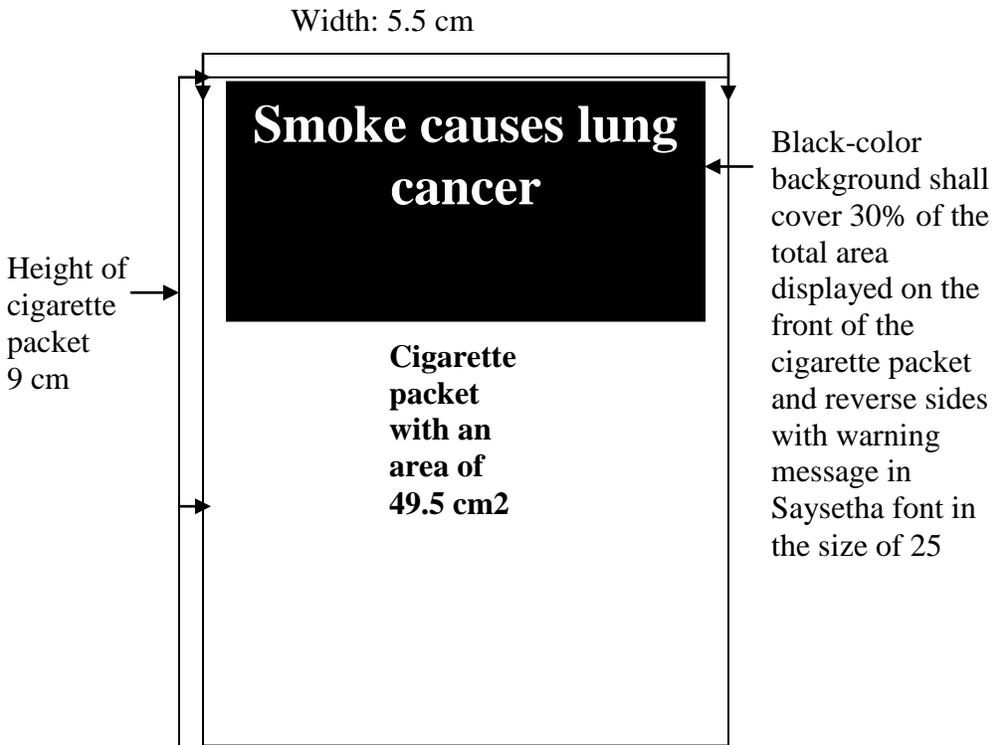
This Regulation shall be effective from the date of signing. Any Decision or regulation inconsistent with this regulation shall be automatically invalid.

- **References**

1. Law on Hygiene, Disease Prevention and Health Promotion No. 01/NA, dated 10 April 2001
2. Decree of the Prime Minister on the Implementation of Ministry of Health, No 020/PMN, dated 19 March 1999
3. Tobacco Control Policy in the Lao PDR 2001, 27 March 2001
4. Reports on the progress of Tobacco Control in the Lao PDR
5. WHO reports on Tobacco and Health
6. Framework Convention on Tobacco Control ratified by WHO in Geneva 2003

- **Example of the warnings printed on cigarette packets and cartons**

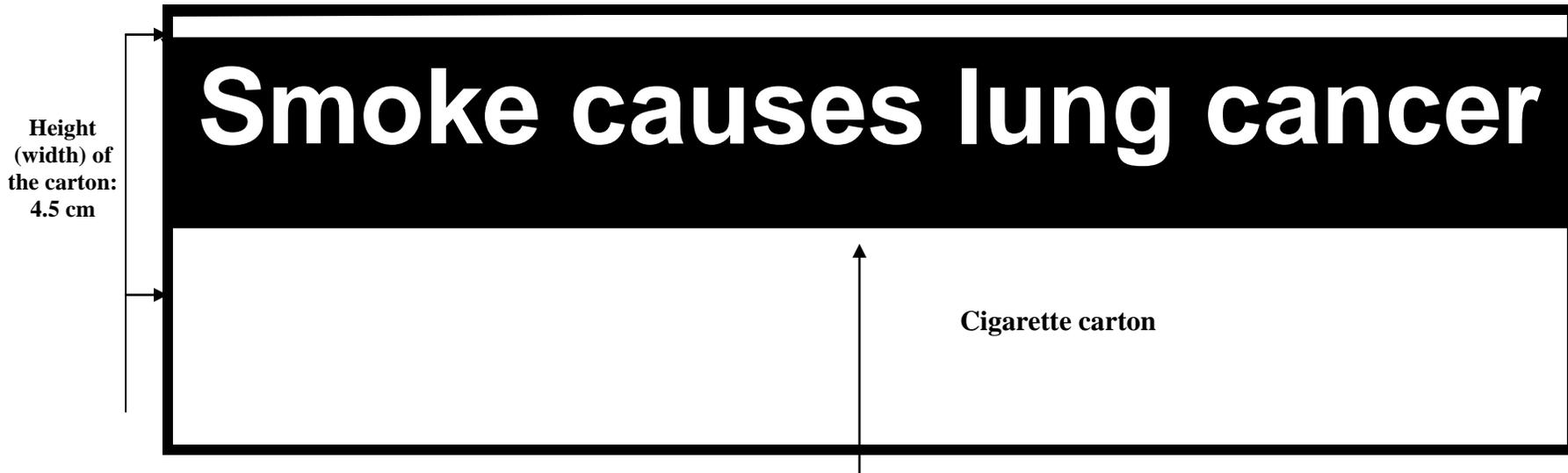
1) Example of warning printed on a cigarette packet



Note: The above picture is only a sample of the printing of warnings for the cigarette packet with a size of 5.5 x 9 cm or with an area of 49.5 cm², but for cigarette packets with sizes different from the sample, the printing of warnings in the above picture shall be done based on the detailed regulation specified in Part II, Article 4 and Article 5

2) Sample of the Printing of Warnings on a Cigarette Carton

Length of the cigarette carton: 28 cm



The warning message with black color background covers 30% of the displayed areas on both sides of the top of the cigarette carton and is printed using Saysetha font in white and has the size of 45

Note: The above picture is only a sample of the printing of warnings. The details on the printing of warning messages shall be referred to in the regulation specified in Part II Article 4, and 5



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