

# Vaping Unveiled: The Impact of Vape Waste

2023 Vaping Rates in CT  
11.5% of CT **youth** reported current use of e-cigarettes. 9.8% of survey respondents also vaped cannabis.<sup>1</sup>

**Adult** e-cigarette use was 6.2%. 14.5% of CT adults report using cannabis. Almost one-third reported vaping as the primary method.<sup>2</sup>



Vapes contain Nicotine and Lithium Batteries which classifies them as hazardous waste products that should **NOT** be placed in normal trash or recycling.



## The Burden of Vape Waste

**Half a million** vapes are discarded every day. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) describes this as an environmental burden.

Lining-up the disposable vapes sold in 2023 would stretch long enough to span the contiguous United States three times.<sup>3</sup>



## School Impact

CT Schools are burdened with a collection of these products when students get caught vaping on campus.

## The Vape Retail Landscape in CT

### Nicotine Vapes:

As of September 2025, **1,787 retailers** had a license to sell Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) products in CT.<sup>4</sup>

This is a **42% increase in retailers** since 2020.

Out of more than 7,066 e-cigarette products for sale in the U.S., **93% are disposable**.<sup>5</sup>

### Cannabis Vapes:

As of January 2026, There are 72 licensed cannabis retailers in CT.<sup>6</sup>

Vape cartridges made up one-third of Connecticut's \$29M cannabis retail sales in 2025.<sup>6</sup>



Join us in our efforts to explore practical solutions to the eco-consequences of vape devices.

# Challenges to Waste Management in CT



The **current management of vapes in CT is not sustainable**; thermal runaway caused by the lithium batteries poses major safety risks to the entire waste system.



**Vapes contain hazardous waste.** Never put them in your trash or recycling bin. Batteries can cause fires and e-liquids contain toxic chemicals.



We are exploring an **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) policy** which would hold manufacturers responsible for helping manage the disposal of vapes in CT.

## How You Can Get Involved:

### Raise Awareness

Share this document with friends and family (especially if they vape nicotine or cannabis), neighbors, colleagues, public health officials, etc.

### Stay Informed

Keep up with current data and news about the topic from trusted sources, like [PIRG](#), [Public Health Law Center](#), [CT DEEP](#), and your [Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization](#) (see below).

### Advocate

Talk to your municipal leaders and CT legislators. Send emails, write letters, and call their office sharing this information; encourage them to get involved in the work and to be a champion for public health and a clean, safe environment..

### Get Involved

The Vaping Unveiled Workgroup meets regularly - **all are welcome and encouraged to join**. Contact [khanley@wctcoalition.org](mailto:khanley@wctcoalition.org) to learn more, or visit [www.hrra.org/vapes](http://www.hrra.org/vapes).



## Brought to you by The Vaping Unveiled Workgroup



Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations (RBHAOs) make up the CT Prevention Network



South Central CT [apw-ct.org](http://apw-ct.org)



Eastern CT [seracct.org](http://seracct.org)



Western CT [wctcoalition.org](http://wctcoalition.org)



North Central CT [amplifyct.org](http://amplifyct.org)



Housatonic Resources Recovery Authority [HRRA.org](http://HRRA.org)



[CT Center for School Safety](#)



[Southern CT State University Health and Human Services](#)

# References



1. The Connecticut School Health Survey (CSHS) is a school-based survey of students in grades 9 - 12, with randomly chosen classrooms within selected schools, and is anonymous and confidential. It is also nationally known as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). 2023 sample size= 3,182, representing 50 schools in CT.



2. CT Department of Public Health Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2023 sample size = 9,501. The BRFSS is a telephone survey conducted by the CDC and CT Department of Public Health.

3. U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) is an advocate for consumers, advancing solutions to problems that affect our health, our safety and well-being. They have done extensive research on vape waste:



- [pirg.org/articles/disposable-vapes-dangerous-damaging-and-just-dumb](https://pirg.org/articles/disposable-vapes-dangerous-damaging-and-just-dumb)
- [publicinterestnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/PIRG-Vape-Waste-2.pdf](https://publicinterestnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/PIRG-Vape-Waste-2.pdf)



4. The CT Department of Consumer Protection is responsible for ENDS Dealer registration and oversight. This data was pulled from their E-License database in September 2025.



5. CDC Monitoring Tobacco Product Use State E-Cigarette Sales Data Brief. Data received by the CDC comes from Information Resources, Inc., which included Universal Product Code sales from brick-and-mortar retailers only, and does not include purchase age or sales data from tobacco-specialty stores, including vape shops and internet retailers.



6. CTData, or Connecticut Open Data, is the archive for public data provided by Connecticut State Agencies. From cannabis products sold to e-cigarette tax revenue, CTData is a reliable source for up-to-date information collected by the State of Connecticut.