

E-Cigarettes: Media Bury the Lede, We Get to Bury the Bodies

“Walmart Inc. will stop selling e-cigarettes in its U.S. locations as the country grapples with a string of vaping-related deaths,” Bloomberg reports.

CNN: “Walmart said Friday [September 20] it will stop selling e-cigarettes as the number of deaths tied to vaping grows.”

Associated Press: “Walmart said Friday that it will stop selling electronic cigarettes at its namesake stores and Sam’s Clubs following a string of mysterious illnesses and deaths related to vaping.”

Nearly every national headline on the story emphasizes “vaping-related” illnesses and deaths. Nearly every first paragraph associates Walmart’s decision with those illnesses and deaths.

“Burying the lede” is the journalistic malpractice of failing to mention the most important facts of a story in the first (“lead” or “lede”) paragraph. That’s what’s going on here.

One has to go to the second paragraph of most major media accounts, if not further, to learn Walmart’s real reason for its decision. Per AP:

“The move is due to ‘growing federal, state and local regulatory complexity’ regarding vaping products, the company said in a statement.”

And one can read most of the stories in their entirety without coming across a couple of other important facts.

Fact #1: So far, wherever a specific “vaping” product has been linked to these “vaping-related” illnesses, that product has been a black market “street vape.” That is, a product you can’t buy at Walmart, or at your local convenience store, or on the web sites of any of the reputable — and government-regulated — makers of e-cigarettes.

Fact #2: While questions remain as to the long-term safety of the relatively new practice of “vaping,” so far every credible study on the practice says it’s safer than smoking tobacco cigarettes.

Walmart isn’t abandoning e-cigarette sales because vaping is unsafe.

Walmart is abandoning e-cigarette sales because it doesn’t want to be left with a bunch of expensive inventory it can’t sell as local, state, and federal governments issue new

regulations on e-cigarette products, up to and including complete bans.

American regulators and politicians are hopping on the bandwagon of a baseless moral panic, created by so-called “public health” advocates and promoted by the mainstream media.

The regulations and bans those regulators and politicians are proposing will increase, not decrease, the illnesses and deaths associated with “street vapes.”

People who want to procure and use nicotine (or cannabis) aren’t going to request permission from regulators or politicians and take no for an answer. They’re just going to go get the stuff.

They’ll buy it at Walmart if they can. They’ll get it from a friend at a party or a stranger on a street corner if that’s their only option.

The regulators and politicians, urged on by promoters of moral panic in the mainstream media and “public health,” are trying to MAKE that their only option.

Mainstream media is burying the lede. The funeral home and cemetery industries should send thank you cards and increase their advertising buys. The longer this goes on, the more grave plots, caskets, headstones, and urns they’re going to sell.