

FIZZY DRINK BILLBOARDS SHOULD INCLUDE HEALTH WARNINGS



Following the news that San Francisco has become the first US city to require health warnings on billboards advertising fizzy soft drinks, Action on Sugar is calling for this to be mandatory in the UK as part of David Cameron's much anticipated Childhood Obesity Strategy due for release in July.

From 25 July 2016 public advertisements on posters and bus shelters in San Francisco will have to carry the message: 'WARNING: Drinking beverages with added sugar(s) contributes to obesity, diabetes and tooth decay'. The warnings will have to cover at least 20% of the advert's surface.

This coincides with Action on Sugar's Evidence Based Action plan (already presented to the Government) which also calls for a ban on all forms of marketing of unhealthy food and drink to children and adolescents. The health warnings must also extend to the product label. Action on Sugar say that it is crucial that parents are aware just how unhealthy regular consumption of these drinks is.

Jennifer Rosborough, Campaign Manager at Action on Sugar, said: 'There is no justification for banning the advertisements of tobacco when unhealthy food and drink are a bigger cause of preventable death and disability in the UK.

'If we are going to tackle the UK's escalating obesity epidemic which will cripple the NHS if it is not addressed immediately, consumers need to be fully aware of the huge quantities of sugar in soft drinks which contribute to the onset of obesity and type 2 diabetes'.

TOBACCO LAWS NOW IN EFFECT

On 20 May 2016 the new law stating that tobacco companies must sell cigarettes with the branding on the packaging restricted to a standard size, font and colour came into effect.

All packs must contain at least 20 cigarettes to ensure they are big enough for health warnings to cover 65% of the front and back. In the UK, all packs must be uniformly olive green coloured with large images highlighting the damaging effects of smoking.

Menthol cigarettes will now be phased out ahead of a total ban in 2020.

It is hoped the new law will reduce the number of smokers across the EU by 2.4 million and will save the NHS around £2.7 billion, according to the British Medical Association (BMA).