



Impact of the Berkeley Excise Tax on Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Consumption

While most United States' states have sale taxes, Berkeley, California, is the first jurisdiction to pass a sugar-sweetened beverage excise tax for public health purposes. This study provides the first evaluation of the impacts of a sugar-sweetened beverage tax in the city through the use of two neighbouring comparison cities, San Francisco and Oakland.

The impact of the tax in low-income neighbourhoods in Berkeley was significant, with a 21% decline in consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages over a 1-year period from pre-tax to post-tax while it increased by 4% in the comparison cities. Sports drink and regular soda observed similar trends. It was also observed that on average, the excise tax was passed through higher soda prices and sugar-sweetened beverage prices overall. While these are only short-term results, it appears possible that a sugar-sweetened beverage excise tax could be one of the few public health interventions expected to reduce health disparities, save more money than it costs and generate substantial revenues for public health programmes.

Reference: Falbe J, Thompson HR, Becker CM, Rojas N, McCulloch CE, Madsen KA. Impact of the Berkeley Excise Tax on Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Consumption. *Am J Public Health*. 2016;106(10):1865-1871. [doi:10.2105/AJPH.2016.303362](https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2016.303362)