

Petrol PLAZA

7-Eleven opens its first lab concept c-store in the US

The newest location is a lab store and an experiential testing ground, where customers can try and buy the retailer's latest innovations in a new store format.



7-Eleven, Inc. celebrated last week the grand opening of its new lab store in Dallas – and the only one in the U.S. This location is less than two miles from the original Southland Ice House in Oak Cliff where 7-Eleven pioneered the convenience retailing concept more than 90 years ago.

“Convenience retailing is light years away from the days of bread and milk being sold from ice docks in 1927, and the industry is changing at a faster rate than ever before,” said Chris Tanco, 7-Eleven executive vice president and chief operating officer. “This new lab store will serve as a place to test, learn and iterate new platforms and products to see what really resonates with customers and how we can use those learnings to influence future store designs.”

The lab store is also the first 7-Eleven location to incorporate the Laredo Taco Company taqueria, and the first Laredo Taco Company location in Dallas. 7-Eleven acquired the taqueria along with Stripes

convenience stores in South Texas as part of the 1,000-store acquisition from Sunoco in 2018.

Some of the other innovative ideas customers will see at the new 7-Eleven lab store include: Made-to-order coffee and drinks, cold-pressed juices, smoothies and agua frescas, a growler refill station pouring local craft beers, baked-in-store cookies and croissants, patio and inside dining areas, etc. Many of the new items in this 7-Eleven “innovation station” are limited-time offerings.

“A lot has changed in retail and continues to change rapidly, especially the shopping experience,” Tanco said. “This lab store is customer-focused and will explore new ideas that weren’t even on the retail radar a few months ago.”