

Reduce the Toll of Tobacco in Texas

Many of the leading causes of death and disability in Texas and the United States today are preventable. While tobacco use is decreasing in Texas, there still is no bigger factor in preventable death and disability in Texas than tobacco use. Texas still has a higher rate of death attributable to smoking — 273 per 100,000 — than the rest of the United States. To protect their residents, each year more Texas cities are adopting ordinances to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke. Cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco (chewing tobacco and snuff) are the most widely used tobacco products in Texas. New products are attracting the interest of tobacco users and minors. Electronic cigarettes or “e-cigarettes,” in particular, are widely accessible and growing in popularity. We need to better educate and support Texans — especially young Texans — so they can live healthier, smoke-free lives.

2015 Tobacco-Free Priorities

- Support adequate funding for comprehensive statewide tobacco control.
- Promote the adoption of local smoke-free ordinances across Texas.
- Support comprehensive statewide smoke-free legislation.
- Support regulation of e-cigarettes as tobacco products, including prevention of youth access.
- Support an increase in the state tobacco tax by at least \$1 per pack of cigarettes and a comparable amount for other tobacco products.

The Toll of Tobacco in Texas

High school students who smoke	14.1% (212,000)
Male high school students who use smokeless or spit tobacco	13.9% (females use much less)
Kids (under 18) who become new daily smokers each year	24,200
Packs of cigarettes bought or smoked by kids each year	64.1 million
Adults in Texas who smoke	15.9% (3,085,500)

Source: *Tobacco-Free Kids, October 2014*

Tobacco in Texas: What You Need to Know

- More than two out of three Texas adult smokers started smoking regularly at age 18 or younger, and 85 percent started at age 21 or younger. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates about 24,000 Texas minors start smoking each year. Nine out of 10 of Texas' 3 million-plus smokers started using tobacco as a teen. A key strategy for decreasing smoking-attributable illnesses and deaths is preventing minors and young adults from ever taking up the tobacco habit.
- The number of youth who had never smoked a cigarette but had used e-cigarettes at least once increased threefold during 2011-13, according to the National Youth Tobacco Survey.
- There are years of data demonstrating the success of coordinated and combined efforts to reduce tobacco use. Successful comprehensive tobacco control programs include regulations, marketing, and community interventions.
- Thirty-six states have adopted smoke-free laws¹ — covering more than 250 million U.S. residents.
- With three out of four registered Texas voters supporting a statewide prohibition of smoking in indoor workplaces and public places,² dozens of cities and towns have passed smoke-free ordinances, but these vary greatly in scope, and only about 36 percent of Texans are protected with smoke-free environments (workplaces, restaurants, and bars).³
- The American Cancer Society estimates Texas could save \$207 million over five years by implementing comprehensive smoke-free legislation. Savings are achieved from fewer heart attacks, strokes, and cases of lung cancer, and from decreased pregnancy complications associated with tobacco use.
- Texas employees and business owners recognize a smoke-free workplace supports their business. The Texas Business Group on Health reports that 90 percent of Texas companies surveyed — representing 400,000 employees — already restrict tobacco use in the workplace, and 76 percent ban smoking indoors.⁴
- Several states already have passed legislation to include e-cigarettes in nonsmoking laws or to restrict the sale of e-cigarettes to minors.

¹ Smoke-free workplaces and/or restaurants, and/or bars, and/or gambling; www.no-smoke.org/pdf/SummaryUSPopList.pdf. Accessed Oct. 29, 2014.

² Baseline & Associates, Inc. Survey of Texas Voters Smoke-Free Law, http://s3.amazonaws.com/smokefree/fact_sheets/original/Baseline_TX_Poll_memo_2013.pdf.

³ www.no-smoke.org/pdf/WRBPercentMap.pdf. Accessed Oct. 20, 2014.

⁴ Texas Employers Benchmarking Survey: Tobacco Use Policies and Programs — 2014.

Texas Public Health Coalition



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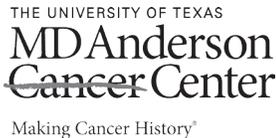


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