



KANE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT MEDIA ADVISORY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Maureen Obuchowski, Health Education Coordinator, (630) 264-7670

Tom Schlueter (630) 444-3098

GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT TURNS 30

On Thursday, Nov. 16, the Kane County Health Department and the American Cancer Society mark three decades of helping smokers kick the habit. Each year since 1976, on the Thursday before Thanksgiving, the Great American Smokeout encourages smokers to give up cigarettes -- for the day, and ideally for good.

The battle against tobacco has gained a lot of momentum since those early days -- and public health advocates have learned a lot about the best ways to help smokers quit. Medications, self-help materials, and counseling can all improve the odds of a smoker getting off cigarettes and staying off.

“We sponsor smoking cessation classes throughout the county. Information on the classes, and other health-related issues regarding tobacco use, can be accessed on our Web site,” said Maureen Obuchowski, Health Education Coordinator for the health department. The Web site address is www.kanehealth.com.

Limiting the places smokers can light up also has had an effect. Several communities in Kane County are hoping to implement tough smoking regulations in their towns by May 1, 2007. Today, more than 2,200 U.S. communities and 17 states are smoke-free, and smoking is prohibited on all domestic airline flights and in many workplaces, restaurants, and other public spaces. As a result, fewer adults in the U.S. are smoking and those who do are smoking less. In 1950, around half of Americans smoked. Today, even though 21 percent of adults still light up, per capita cigarette consumption is at its lowest point since World War II.

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There's a big cancer payoff from that drop in smoking: Lung Cancer rates are going down among men, and leveling off among women. Still, lung cancer is the top cancer killer of both men and women in the U.S., claiming more than 160,000 lives each year. And more than 44 million U.S. adults still smoke, putting themselves at risk of not only lung cancer, but also other types of cancer as well as heart disease, stroke, emphysema, and other ailments.

For smoking cessation classes:

Delnor Wellness Center, Geneva, call (630) 208-3940 for dates and to register.

Dreyer Medical Clinic, Aurora, call (630) 859-6898 for dates and to register.

Provena Saint Joseph Hospital, Elgin, call (847) 931-1800 for dates and to register.

Rush-Copley Heart Institute, Aurora, call (866) 426-7539 for dates and to register.

More information is available at the American Cancer Society Web site: www.cancer.org

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