

## **News Release**

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### **For Immediate Release**

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### **Great American Smokeout November 21st**

The Great American Smokeout is November 21, 2024. This is also an exciting year, as Governor Pillen is signing a proclamation that declares November 17-23, 2024, Tobacco Cessation Awareness Week. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) supports the American Cancer Society's annual Great American Smokeout event and encourages community members to take the next steps toward decreasing tobacco use and helping create healthier communities throughout Nebraska.

The tobacco epidemic is a large public health threat that is faced all over the world. It is estimated that over 22% of the world's population uses tobacco in some form. Tobacco kills more than 8 million people every year. More than 1.3 million of the people who die are non-smokers that have experienced second-hand smoke exposure.

"Quitting tobacco is hard but even one step in the right direction can make a difference to not only your health, but also the health of the people around you," explains Hunter York, Program Manager at SWNPHD. "There are many benefits when you quit smoking, including improved health, increased stamina, and a reduced chance of getting lung cancer. During this annual event, join thousands of others across the country and start living your smoke-free life!"

It is important to understand what resources and tools are available to help you succeed and start living a smoke-free life. With free resources like the Nebraska Tobacco Quitline, the process can be much easier.

The Nebraska Quitline offers coaching and counseling services and resources to those who are ready to take the next step in their quitting journey. You can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669) or visit [QuitNow.ne.gov](http://QuitNow.ne.gov) for additional resources and to learn more about free quit medication. Spanish-speaking participants can call 1-855-DÉJELO-YA (3535-3569). The Quitline provides translation services in over 200 languages.

There are also other resources that can help you quit tobacco use for good. Talk with your doctor to find out what resource would work best for you. These resources include:

- **Healthcare providers** - Speak with your healthcare provider about ways to quit.
- **Counseling** - There are many different counseling options including group counseling, individual counseling, and telehealth counseling options.
- **Medications** - There are a few different options for both over the counter and prescription non-nicotine medications.

For additional information, call SWNPHD at 308-345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. Follow SWNPHD on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube for further details and recent updates. You can also check out our website at [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov) which contains many resources and additional information helpful to prevent disease, promote and protect health.

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