



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Southern Nevada Health District celebrates World No Tobacco Day, May 31

Las Vegas – This year the theme of the 19th World No Tobacco Day 2007 - 100% Smoke-Free Environments – highlights the progress achieved in the United States and around the world in protecting non-smokers from the serious health risks of exposure to secondhand smoke. The Southern Nevada Health District marks World No Tobacco Day with a continued call to residents to adopt smoke-free lifestyles and by recognizing the community for its support of the Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act.

The Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act was passed by a majority of Nevada voters in November and represents a major policy shift for the community and a significant achievement for supporters of smoke-free laws.

In recent years, the number of adults in Clark County who smoke continues to decline. In 2005, approximately 23.5 percent of adults in the county were smokers according to the Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), compared to 23.1 percent statewide and 20.6 percent nationally. At the beginning of this decade approximately 29 percent of Nevada adults smoked. Last year, the percentage of adults who smoke in Nevada dropped again to 22.2 percent according to the BRFSS.

“In the past several years, we have made great strides in reducing the number of smokers in our community,” said Dr. Lawrence Sands, the health district’s chief health officer. “In Southern Nevada, we continue to reduce the risk of exposure to secondhand smoke as more and more places are smoke free and comply with the recently enacted Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act. In addition, our tobacco control program continues to develop new and innovative programs and campaigns to encourage young people to be smoke-free.”

The Southern Nevada Health District’s tobacco control program has four major goals: to prevent youth smoking, to promote smoking cessation among adults and youth, to eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke, and to eliminate health disparities among diverse populations.

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, killing more than 400,000 people each year – more than alcohol, illicit drugs, homicide, suicide, car accidents and AIDS combined. Exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke can cause a number of health problems, such as cancer, and it can aggravate existing conditions like asthma, allergies and heart disease.

World No Tobacco Day 2007 focuses on the prominent role health professionals play in tobacco control and education. For additional information, contact the health district tobacco control program at (702) 759-1270 or visit www.gethealthyclarkcounty.org.

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