



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 19, 2008

Health District asks smokers to quit for one day; The Great American Smokeout, Nov. 20

LAS VEGAS – The Great American Smokeout debuted in 1976 as an opportunity for smokers to give up the habit for just one day. This year, the American Cancer Society has designated Thursday, Nov. 20 as the Great American Smokeout. It was thought that if a person could quit smoking for one day, he might be able to give up the habit completely. The Southern Nevada Health District encourages smokers in the community to participate and to commit to a long-term plan to quit for good. It is estimated that 44 percent of the 45 million American smokers have attempted to quit for one day in the past year.

For assistance, smokers can visit the health district's Get Healthy Clark County website, www.GetHealthyClarkCounty.org to find tips to help them quit smoking as well as additional resources. Smokers can contact the Nevada Tobacco Users' Helpline at 1-800-QUIT NOW and speak with a professional, licensed counselor for confidential assistance. The site includes recent television commercials about the affects of secondhand smoke on children titled "It's Like They're Smoking."

The American Cancer Society offers the American Cancer Society Quitline® at 1-800 227-2345 as well as its new MySpace page for smoking cessation support at www.myspace.com/americancancersociety.

Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States. Annually, smoking accounts for more than 400,000 premature deaths, 38,000 of whom are nonsmokers following exposure to secondhand smoke. Half of Americans who continue to smoke will die from a smoking-related illness.

For additional information, call the Southern Nevada Health District's Office of Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, (702) 759-1270 or visit www.SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict.org.