



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**January 17, 2014**

**The Southern Nevada Health District marks the  
50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First Surgeon General's Report on Smoking**

**LAS VEGAS** – As the United States marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first Surgeon General's report on smoking, the Southern Nevada Health District is celebrating the great progress that has been made in reducing tobacco use, while also noting that much more needs to be accomplished in order to win the fight against what is still the nation's number one cause of preventable death.

The first Surgeon General's report, issued on January 11, 1964, alerted Americans to the deadly consequences of smoking and was a historic turning point in the nation's fight against tobacco. In the past 50 years, the United States has made remarkable progress, cutting smoking rates by more than half, protecting much of the population from harmful secondhand smoke, and saving millions of lives.

At the local level tobacco control programs have contributed to a dramatic reduction in smoking rates in adults and youth, with respective decreases of 31.5 and 30.7 percent in 1999 to 18.1 and 8.3 percent in 2012. But the battle against tobacco is far from over. Tobacco use still kills more than 440,000 Americans each year, sickens millions more, and costs the nation \$193 billion a year in health care bills and lost productivity. In Nevada, 3,300 adults die each year from their own smoking, and health care costs directly caused by smoking top out at \$565 million each year.

"The Surgeon General's report was a seminal study that demonstrated the definitive link between smoking and cancer," said Dr. Joe Iser, chief health officer of the Southern Nevada Health District. "However, there is still considerable work that needs to be done, including educating the public on the alternative tobacco and nicotine products that are flooding the market and supporting policy initiatives that provide a safe and healthy environment for Southern Nevada residents and visitors."

As the community commemorates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Surgeon General's report, the health district is urging the community to continue the progress that has been made in Southern Nevada, including supporting comprehensive tobacco control programs and policy initiatives.

Local program and free online resource information can be found on the health district's website: [www.GetHealthyClarkCounty.org](http://www.GetHealthyClarkCounty.org). One such resource is the Nevada Tobacco Users Helpline. The program provides free, confidential telephone-based counseling for Nevada residents who want to address their tobacco use. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to contact the Helpline today.

(more)

Surgeon General's report - add one

Additional quitting resources are geared specifically for teens, including the American Lung Association's Not on Tobacco (N-O-T) program. N-O-T is a voluntary program offered free to teens. It is the most researched, widely used and successful program of its kind in the United States. For more information on the Not on Tobacco program, contact the American Lung Association at (702) 431-6333.

The health district's GetHealthyClarkCounty.org website also includes a smoke-free housing directory, information on other tobacco products, including electronic cigarettes, sections about initiatives such as smoke-free public places, as well as additional resources on quitting smoking.

Updated information about the Southern Nevada Health District can be found on Facebook [www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict](http://www.facebook.com/SouthernNevadaHealthDistrict), on YouTube [www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict](http://www.youtube.com/SNHealthDistrict) or Twitter: [www.twitter.com/SNHDInfo](http://www.twitter.com/SNHDInfo). The health district is now available in Spanish on Twitter [www.twitter.com/TuSNHD](http://www.twitter.com/TuSNHD). Don't have a Twitter account? Follow the health district on your phone by texting "follow SNHDInfo" to 40404.