
HEALTH DEPARTMENT
NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Great American Smokeout, Thursday November 19th
Kent County Health Department Working Toward Tobacco Free Lifestyle**

GRAND RAPIDS - Get ready to lose the habit and declare victory over tobacco. The American Cancer Society's 40th annual Great American Smokeout encourages smokers to quit for just one day, make a quit smoking plan or quit entirely. The Great American Smokeout also asks nonsmokers to encourage their smoking friends and family members to kick the habit.

“Smoking is highly addictive and quitting is very difficult,” says Adam London, Administrative Health Officer at the Kent County Health Department. “Almost every smoker makes several attempts before they are successful at quitting for good. The Great American Smokeout offers an opportunity to quit for a day. If you can make it a day, you can quit for a week. If you quit for a week, you can kick the habit for life.”

Though the number of smokers and tobacco users has dropped dramatically in recent years, 42 million Americans still smoke cigarettes. Tobacco use remains the single largest preventable cause of disease and premature death in the United States, according to the American Cancer Society. In Kent County approximately 13% of adults are current smokers according to the Behavioral Risk Factor Survey of 2014 and more than 21% of Michigan residents consider themselves smokers.

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) says that 90% of lung cancer cases in the state are linked to smoking. Lung Cancer is the leading cause of all cancer deaths in the state, killing 5761 people in 2013. There are many resources available to help smokers. Many insurance plans, including Medicare and Medicaid, may help pay for assistance.

The American Cancer Society offers a “toolkit” on its website:

www.cancer.org/healthy/stayawayfromtobacco/greatamericansmokeout/. MDHHS resources are available by clicking [here](#) or by calling 1-800- QUIT-NOW (784-8669)

Whatever method a smoker chooses to quit, KCHD warns against the use of E-Cigarettes or vaping as an alternative to smoking. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, E-cigarette liquids containing nicotine have the potential to cause immediate adverse health effects and represent an emerging public health concern.

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KCHD has been in the business of providing health services to Kent County since 1931. The Health Department is home to nearly 265 employees including public health nurses, sanitarians, health educators, technicians, public health administrators, and specialized staff at the Kent County Animal Shelter. The Health Department operates one main clinic and three satellite clinics located in Kentwood, Rockford, and Grand Rapids. To learn more about KCHD services, visit www.accesskent.com/health.

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