Dickinson-Iron District Health Department

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Dickinson-Iron District Health Department Kicks off 'Kick Butts' Month in November

Kingsford and Iron River, Michigan, November 3, 2008 – The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department is recognizing November as '**Kick Butts' Month.** During this month, health officials are encouraging local community members to live a tobacco-free life and reduce their risk of the leading causes of preventable deaths in Michigan.

In 1982, the United States Surgeon General's Report on the Health Consequences of Smoking stated that "Cigarette smoking is the major single cause of cancer mortality in the United States." Today, smoking is responsible for nearly one in five deaths in the United States. In Michigan, cigarette smoking and secondhand smoke are the two leading causes of preventable deaths. Because smoking is an activity that an individual chooses to do, smoking is the most preventable cause of premature death in our society.

According to the 2006 Michigan Behavioral Risk Factor Survey, about 22.1 percent of adults in Michigan are current smokers. Smoking kills more people each year than alcohol, AIDS, car crashes, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined.

Cancer
Cigarette smoking accounts for at least 30% of all cancer deaths. It is a major cause of cancers of the lung, larynx (voice box), oral cavity, throat, esophagus, and bladder, and a contributing cause in the development of cancers of the pancreas, cervix, kidney, stomach, and also some leukemias. Smoking causes about 87% of lung cancer deaths. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer deaths among both men and women, and is one of the most difficult cancers to treat.

Other Health Problems
Smoking is the major cause of heart disease, aneurysms, bronchitis, emphysema, and stoke, and it contributes to the severity of pneumonia and asthma. Smoking can also be associated with reduced fertility and a higher risk of miscarriage, early delivery (prematurity), stillbirth, infant death, and is a cause of low birth weight in infants. It can also be linked to sudden infant death syndrome.

Secondhand Smoke
The smoke from cigarettes (called secondhand smoke or environmental tobacco smoke) has a harmful health effect on those exposed to it. Secondhand smoke is as dangerous as smoking, especially if a person is exposed on a daily basis. When nonsmokers are exposed to secondhand smoke, it is called involuntary smoking or passive smoking. Nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke absorb nicotine and other compounds just as smokers do. The greater the exposure to secondhand smoke, the greater the level of these harmful compounds in the body.

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Throughout the year, the Dickinson-Iron District Health Department works to reduce the number of smokers and the exposure of secondhand smoke by offering smoking cessation counseling, participating in coalitions, celebrating national observances like the "Great American Smokeout," and working with communities on smoke-free policies.

"The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department is always working to guard and protect against threats and illness caused by exposure to cigarette smoke, because saving lives saves dollars," said Kelly Rumpf, Health Educator.

The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department is committed to promoting wellness, preventing disease, providing health care, and protecting the environment. For additional information about quitting smoking and secondhand smoke, contact your local health department at (906) 779-7234 or visit www.didhd.org.

Additional information about the **"Public Health – For Michigan. For You"** slogan can be found at www.malph.org.

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