

## Report shows brief smoke exposure poses health risk

ESCANABA — The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Office of the Surgeon General released their most recent report on tobacco use, "How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease: The Biology Behavioral Basis for Smoking-Attributable Disease." The report finds that cellular damage and tissue inflammation from tobacco smoke are immediate, and that repeated exposure weakens the body's ability to heal the damage.

"This report provides further evidence to what health officials have been saying for years: there is no 'safe' level of exposure to secondhand smoke, and even just brief exposure to secondhand smoke can do immediate damage and even prove fatal," said Shanna Hammond, the tobacco coordinator for Public Health, Delta & Menominee Counties.

"These findings offer further evidence of the importance of investing in tobacco prevention programming in Michigan. We need to ensure that resources are available to prevent youth from starting to smoke, to protect nonsmokers from the health harms associated with secondhand smoke, and to provide help to smokers who want to quit."

Dr. Gregory Holzman, chief medical executive for the State of Michigan, recognized the importance of these findings as they relate to Michigan's Smoke-Free Air Law.

"We're fortunate in Michigan to have a law in place that protects the majority of nonsmokers from secondhand smoke exposure in workplaces, bars and restaurants," he said. "We expect to see a decrease in heart attack admissions since the law was enacted, which will result in saved lives and decrease health care cost."

According to Holzman, the report also emphasizes the health benefits of quitting smoking. "It is never too late to quit smoking, but the sooner that a person quits, the better for their health," he said.

The Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) Tobacco Quitline, 1 (800) 784-8669, continues to provide free telephone coaching for the uninsured and those with Medicaid and Medicare, and free nicotine replacement medications for those who qualify. Information on quitting smoking and a printable Michigan Smoker's Quit Kit are available through MDCH by visiting: [www.michigan.gov/tobacco](http://www.michigan.gov/tobacco).

Copies of the full report, executive summary, and the easy-to-read guide may be downloaded at [www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/tobaccosmoke/index.html](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/tobaccosmoke/index.html).

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