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SEDGWICK COUNTY, KANSAS
COMMUNICATIONS

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sedgwick County Health Department Promotes the 2009 Great American Smokeout

(Sedgwick County, Kansas) – The Sedgwick County Health Department announces the 34th annual American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout (GASO), Thursday, November 19. The Great American Smokeout is an opportunity for smokers to go a full day (24 hours) without cigarettes, in the hope they may quit permanently.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports the following statistics regarding health improvements after quitting:

- 20 minutes after your last cigarette, your heart rate drops to normal.
- 12 hours after quitting, the carbon monoxide level in your blood normalizes.
- One year after quitting, the risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

“The Great American Smokeout is an excellent date to quit smoking,” stated Sedgwick County Health Department Director Claudia Blackburn. “Quitting tobacco is most effective when people plan to fight cravings and triggers. If people quit on November 19, they will be quitting with thousands of smokers around the country. There is comfort in knowing you're not alone.”

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The Sedgwick County Health Department is partnering with the American Cancer Society to sponsor cigarette drop-off booths at the Wichita metro-area YMCAs (north, south, east, west, and central branches). These booths will be available from 6 to 9 a.m. on Thursday, November 19. In exchange for tobacco products, participants will receive a free Quit Kit that includes information on becoming smoke-free. Participants will also receive a Jimmy John's cold turkey sandwich while supplies last.

Besides supporting the Great American Smokeout, the Sedgwick County Health Department also is promoting the 15th annual Gay American Smokeout. The lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community has one of the highest rates of smoking among minority populations. Smoking kills more gay people than hate crimes, suicide and AIDS combined.

In recognition of the Gay American Smokeout, the Sedgwick County Health Department will host a booth at Fantasy (3201 S Hillside, Wichita) on Saturday, November 14. Tobacco Quit Kits will be available.

If you or someone you know is ready to quit tobacco, the toll-free Kansas Tobacco Quitline 1-866-QUIT-NOW (1-866-784-8669) is ready to help. Experienced quit coaches work with callers to prepare for a quit date and help them make a free personalized quit plan.

For more information on smoking, its negative consequences, and helpful resources, visit www.sedgwickcounty.org.

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