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Great American Smokeout coming this Thursday

Local health advocates: there are lots of ways to get help

(Florence, WI) – The annual Great American Smokeout is scheduled for Thursday, November 18. The event, sponsored by the American Cancer Society, encourages people who currently smoke to quit – even if it’s just for one day. This year, members of the Florence County Health Department and the Northwoods Tobacco Free Coalition say there are more tools than ever before to help people quit.

“If people who smoke are ready to quit, there are a lot of places they can go for help,” said Ann Price of the Florence County Health Department. “We’re all different, so it’s important that the state offer a number of support options to help people quit – especially when you’re dealing with an addiction as powerful as nicotine and commercial tobacco products.”

There are a number of options that are available in Wisconsin, including:

- The Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line, which provides free help and medications to those who call the line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669). Individuals can also access the Quit Line by texting “READY” to 200-400
- The Medicaid program provides free quit smoking services and medications through its cessation benefit. People enrolled in Medicaid are encouraged to talk to their doctor about the resources available through the program
- Pregnant, postpartum, and caregiving people who smoke, as well as their family members, can get help to quit from the Wisconsin Women’s Health Foundation’s First Breath program. Since 2000, the program has helped 20,000 women across the state. Learn more at www.joinfirstbreath.org.
- Finally, teens who are addicted to e-cigarettes can receive free help through the Live Vape Free program by texting “VAPEFREE” to 273373. The program provides teens with interactive resources to help them determine their motivation for quitting and set a quit date. Additionally, adults who want to support a young person trying to quit e-cigarettes can take part in a free online course from Live Vape Free by visiting www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/vapefree.

There are many benefits to quitting smoking, including some that start almost immediately. When you quit, your heart rate and blood pressure drops within 20 minutes, the carbon monoxide in the bloodstream drops to normal within 12 hours, and in 2 weeks your circulation and lung function begins to improve.

For more on tobacco prevention and control efforts in Florence County, community members are encouraged to visit the Florence County Health Department at www.florencewipublichealth.com or on Facebook at @FlorenceCountyHealthDept

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