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SmokeFree Wisconsin Encourages Wisconsinites to Celebrate New Year's Day in September

The September 1st increase in cost of tobacco products is a great time for a resolution to quit smoking

(Madison, WI) Effective Tuesday, September 1st, the state's cigarette tax will be increased by 75 cents to \$2.52 per pack, the 5th highest cigarette tax in the nation. The price-based tax on moist snuff (MST) and other tobacco products (OTP) will also increase; 100% of manufacturer's established list price for MST and 71% for OTP.

SmokeFree Wisconsin supported these increases because research has shown that significant increases in the cigarette tax will deter young people from starting to smoke or use tobacco products, and provides motivation for adult smokers to avoid paying more in taxes and quit the addiction. General consensus among researchers is that every 10 percent increase in the real price of cigarettes reduces overall cigarette consumption by approximately three to five percent, reduces the number of young-adult smokers by 3.5 percent, and reduces the number of kids who smoke by six or seven percent.

"Instead of waiting until January 1st for your New Years Resolution to quit smoking, we encourage you to celebrate New Years in September, by timing your resolution to quit with the September 1st increase in Wisconsin's tobacco taxes," said SmokeFree Wisconsin Executive Director Maureen Busalacchi.

As SmokeFree Wisconsin counts down to September 1st, we will highlight a reason to quit smoking and using tobacco, and a resource that is available to assist Wisconsinites in their resolution to quit.

Today's reason and resource are:

REASON #1: IMPACT OF SMOKING AND TOBACCO USE IN WISCONSIN

Tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death in Wisconsin, claiming more than 7,300 lives each year and costing the state \$2 billion annually in health care bills, including \$480 million in Medicaid payments alone. Government

expenditures related to tobacco amount to a hidden tax of \$594 each year on every Wisconsin household.

RESOURCE #1: WISCONSIN TOBACCO QUIT LINE- "IT'S FREE"

The Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line offers free, confidential, non-judgmental coaching and information about how to quit. Quit coaches help each caller develop an individualized quit plan, including selecting a quit date. Callers can finish with the first call, or request a program in which a quit coach calls you back at times you select. The Quit Line also sends callers a free quit guide with information about quitting methods, medications and other tips. Research shows smokers who use the Quit Line are four times more likely to quit than if they try to quit on their own.

The Quit Line has helped more than 50,000 Wisconsin residents in six years of operation and has saved the state \$42 million dollars in avoided healthcare expenses. The service has a 91 percent satisfaction rating from callers.

Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to get started (800-784-8669). It's free.