

NEWS RELEASE
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Contact: Karrey Britt
Communications Coordinator
Office: (785) 856-7362

Health Department, LiveWell Lawrence forming work group to focus on tobacco use prevention, cessation

(Lawrence, KS) – The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department encourages people to quit smoking as part of the American Cancer Society’s 38th annual Great American Smokeout on Thursday, Nov. 21.

Tobacco use is the single most preventable cause of death and disease. About 3,900 Kansans die from smoking-related diseases every year, and more than 290 Kansans die annually from secondhand smoke. “Despite these risks, smoking is still a common practice,” said Charlie Bryan, Community Health planner. In Douglas County, one in five individuals identified themselves as a current smoker in 2011.

The Health Department encourages residents to use the Kansas Tobacco Quitline — 1-800-QUIT-NOW (784-8669) or KSquit.org — when they are ready to quit because it is one of the most effective resources. The program provides free, private counseling and is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Additionally, the Health Department is working with LiveWell Lawrence to address tobacco use prevention and cessation in Douglas County. They are forming a work group called “Tobacco-Free Living.” The focus of the work will include: preventing the initiation of tobacco use among youth and young adults, helping tobacco users of all ages to quit, and reducing exposure to second-hand smoke. Residents interested in serving on the work group may contact Bryan at 843-3060 or cbryan@ldchealth.org.

About the Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department

The Lawrence-Douglas County Health Department has served the Lawrence and Douglas County community for more than 120 years. Its mission is to advance policies, practices and programs that promote health for all, prevent disease and protect the environment.

About LiveWell Lawrence

LiveWell Lawrence is a coalition of more than 100 businesses, agencies and individuals who are working to make it easier for Douglas County residents to eat healthy foods, be physically active and live tobacco free.