

**BREATHE EASY
CONTACT
INFORMATION**

ADDRESS:

3536 18TH AVE SW
CEDAR RAPIDS, IA
52404

PHONE:

319-390-1884 X205

FAX:

319-390-3513

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Tobacco Free Coalition

Spring Newsletter

APRIL—JUNE 2009

Secondhand Smoke: Silent Killer Hurts Pets, Too

Health officials often talk about the dangers of living with a smoker, but few pet parents are aware that our animal companions face similar risks—from respiratory problems to cancer—when exposed to secondhand smoke. New research suggests that secondhand smoke is unsafe at all levels—for humans *and* pets—so it's time to get serious about ditching those butts for good.

One recent study shows that nearly 30 percent of pets live with at least one smoker. This is a grave concern, according to Dr. Sharon Gwaltney-Brant, Medical Director of the ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center, since secondhand smoke can damage the nervous systems of both cats and dogs.

"Tobacco smoke has been shown to contain numerous cancer-causing compounds, making it hazardous for animals as well as humans," says Dr. Gwaltney-Brant. "Exposure to secondhand smoke can cause many of the same harmful inflammatory changes in the airways and lungs of dogs as their human counterparts." Cats who live with smokers are

prone to developing malignant lymphoma, perhaps as a result of ingesting carcinogenic residue when it settles on their fur. Kitty's canine counterparts are especially vulnerable to secondhand smoke's respiratory effects, and can develop life-



threatening nasal and lung cancers. Nicotine—found in cigarettes and other tobacco products—is also highly toxic to animals if ingested. A dog who accidentally eats tobacco may develop weakness, muscle twitching, decreased breathing rate, and finally collapse, coma and possibly death. The ASPCA strongly recommends keeping your pet away from tobacco as well as secondhand smoke.

In honor of Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Month in April, why not

resolve to avoid smoking around your pet? Smoke outside and preserve the lungs of your two- and four-legged family members. Or better yet, toss those cigarettes in the trash—your pet will thank you! For more information about protecting the health of your furry friend, please visit the ASPCA's Guide to Pet Care.

This article was brought to you by the ASPCA or the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Please, visit the following link <http://www.asPCA.org/news/national/04-24-09.html#1> to view this article online and receive more information about the harmful effects of secondhand smoke on pets and what you can do to prevent this problem.

Breathe Easy Thanks Compliant Schools

By Meghan Ferol

The Breathe Easy Tobacco Free Coalition would like to congratulate the Linn County School districts that have adopted the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) guidelines for tobacco free schools. These school districts include: Cedar Rapids Community School District, Cedar Rapids Area Catholic Education System, College Community School District, Linn Mar Community

School District and Marion Independent School District.

Many school districts call themselves smoke-free, but actually fall short because they fail to address some of the key guidelines set forth by the CDC.

These guidelines address smoking by visitors, smoking in school owned vehicles and the use of smokeless tobacco products, etc. While these issues may seem insignificant to some, it's important to remember that the school

district and the policies they uphold set an example for the youth they serve.

If your school district is not listed above, contact a school board member and express your concern. The Breathe Easy Coalition would like to see these guidelines adopted county wide and is willing to offer assistance. Please, email Meghan Ferol at mferol@hotmail.com for more information.

The raw numbers from July 1, 2008 until March 22, 2009:

- ▣ 6,775 questions and comments have been submitted
- ▣ 2,614 complaints have been received
- ▣ 570 partnership site visits have occurred
- ▣ 215 law enforcement site visits have occurred
- ▣ 749 businesses have been sent a first notice of potential violation

Legislative Update from Beverly Walsmith of the Iowa Tobacco Prevention Alliance.

Although several bills were drafted early in the session, they never made it out of committee—there was no debate in either chamber of the Legislature on any proposals to change the Smoke-free Air Act. No changes were made to the Iowa Smoke-free Air Act during the 2009 session. The HHS sub approps committee did reduce the budget cut to the Tobacco Control Division from 18% to 7%, and that recommendation was accepted by the Legislature.

Smoke-Free Air Act - Enforcement Update

The Iowa Attorney General's Office (AG) in partnership with the Tobacco Division, has taken enforcement measures against businesses for Smoke Free Air Act (SFAA) violations. The AG sent settlement letters to eleven businesses. Five businesses have settled and paid \$100 fines to the state. Violations have been dis-

missed or deferred for three businesses.

Two businesses have been referred to the county attorney for prosecution, and one business is pending.

Meanwhile, the AG has also filed administrative hearing complaints with the Alcoholic Beverages Division on 38 liquor licensees for liquor code viola-

tions for illegal activity on the premises (SFAA violations).

One liquor licensee has elected to sign a settlement agreement to accept a 7-day liquor license suspension and pay a \$1,000 civil penalty.

This information is from the Iowa Department of Public Health's Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control

Federal Tobacco Tax - April 1

"Our new Constitution is now established, and has an appearance that promises permanency; but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes."

-Benjamin Franklin, 1789

Although it is a commonly used quote, it is hard to imagine that Franklin could have imagined a tax that could curb the leading cause of preventable death in this country.

Starting in April, federal taxes

increased on all tobacco products. The most visible increase will be on cigarettes, which will increase \$.62 cents per pack.

In Iowa, that drives the price of an average pack of cigarettes over \$5.00, with \$2.37 of it being state and federal taxes.

"A 10% price increase usually drops demand by about 7% among youth and 4% among adults," said Bonnie Mapes, director of the Tobacco Division. "As a result of this federal increase, fewer youth will buy cigarettes and more adults will

decide to quit."

Quitline Iowa saw a 20% increase in calls shortly after tobacco companies raised their prices in mid-March to compensate for the tax.

The additional tax revenue will go to support children's health insurance programs, such as **hawk-i** in Iowa.

This information is from the Iowa Department of Public Health's Division of Tobacco Use Prevention and Control

Take Charge - One High School Student's Perspective

By Savanna Wolfe (Marion High School Sophomore)

Take Charge is a group of students at Marion High School that teach kids how to make good choices. I've been in Take Charge for 2 years. I am one of 43 students involved in the group.

We won a \$5,000 grant for signing up for Jel, which stands for Just Eliminate Lies. Jel has lots of non-smoking and smokeless tobacco commercials. We used the grant to buy a lot of new things for our presentations. One thing we are putting together this year is a carnival on April 26th. The carnival is for Kick Butts Day. Kick Butts Day is a day where smokers are

encouraged to quit, hoping that one day they will eventually quit altogether. At the carnival there is going to be a lot of games that teach about why you shouldn't smoke. The best part is that it's all free.

Take Charge has a meeting each month the discuss events like Kick Butts Day, The Great American Smoke Out and the Great American Spit Out. We also use those meetings to set up presentations. We go to different schools in the Marion District and talk to the kids about the effects that drugs, drinking and alcohol have on you. The presentations are given to kids from kindergarten to freshman. We think it helps a lot to inform kids early so

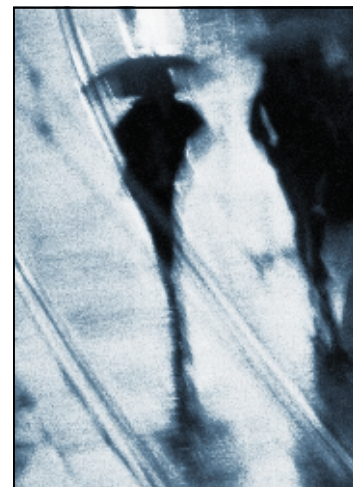
they know all the facts.

One thing we did before the smoking ban was sit-ins. One was at the Maid-Rite and the other was at Olive Garden in Cedar Rapids. We went to the restaurants and took up the whole smoking section. The point of doing this was to prove to the business that they would still get customers even if they didn't allow smoking. We even ended up on the news. We hope that our effort impacted their decision for the smoking ban.

As you can see tobacco effects a lot of people and we are trying to inform the world about it one step at a time.

April 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12 Easter	13	14	15 BE April meeting	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 Take Charge Carnival at Marion HS
26	27	28	29	30		



May 2009

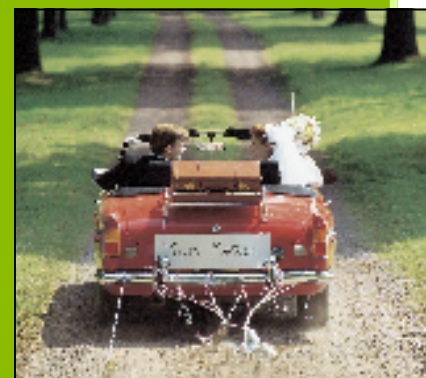


The World Health Organization has selected "Tobacco Health Warnings" as the theme for World No Tobacco Day 2009. WHO supports cigarette warnings that contain images and words. Currently more than a dozen countries contain such warnings.
<http://www.who.int/tobacco/communications/events/wntd/2009/en/index.html>

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 Mother's Day	11	12 BE May meeting	13	14	15	16 Armed Forces Day
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 Memorial Day	26	27	28	29	30
31 World No Tobacco Day						

June 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 BE June meeting	10	11	12 Relay for Life at Kirkwood CC	13
14 Flag Day	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 Father's Day, Summer Begins	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				



The Breathe Easy BIO

The Breathe Easy Tobacco Free Coalition was established in 1992 and is made up of agencies, community members, and students in Linn, Benton and Jones Counties. Breathe Easy works towards preventing youth from using tobacco products, helps tobacco users quit smoking, promotes the elimination of exposure to secondhand smoke and helps educate populations targeted by tobacco companies. Coalition activities include co-sponsoring the Take Charge conference, providing assistance in implementing tobacco free policies in workplaces and schools, and educating the legislature and community about current tobacco control issues.

The BE website is under construction, the new address will soon be announced

Get to know your fellow BE members with the member SPOTLIGHT

This issue's **SPOTLIGHT** is shining on...**Dave Martin**

What is your full name?

David Gardner Martin

Where do you live?

Cedar Rapids and have for 50+ years

Where do you work?

St. Wenceslaus Church

Describe your main duties at work.

My position is Parish Manager. In collaboration with our pastor I direct/coordinate/oversee all programming, ministries, and planning.

Which coalition goal are you most passionate about?

Not allowing the repeal or

even watering down of Iowa's 2008 Smoke-Free Air Act.

Of which coalition accomplishments are you most proud?

The 2008 Smoke-Free Air Act. I thought for sure we would need to continue to see voluntary compliance for a much longer time while we also fought for legislation.

What would you like to see the coalition focus on in the future?

Education and cessation programming to help us continue to see the percentage of smokers drop.