



Greene County Public Health
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Press Release

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Greene County Public Health Encourages Smokers To Quit Smoking During The Great American Smokeout® *The 46th Annual Great American Smokeout® is November 18, 2021*

XENIA, OH – Greene County Public Health is encouraging Greene County residents to commit or recommit to healthy, smoke-free lives by participating in the American Cancer Society’s 46th Great American Smokeout® on Thursday, November 18, 2021.

“The most important thing smokers can do to improve their health is to quit smoking cigarettes and other forms of combustible tobacco,” said Kristianna Durham, Tobacco Cessation Specialist for Greene County Public Health. “We are showing our support for people who take those first steps toward making a plan to quit.”

Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States, accounting for 29% of all cancer deaths. In fact, smoking cigarettes kills more Americans than AIDS, alcohol, car accidents, illegal drugs, murders and suicides combined. Smoking not only causes cancer. It damages nearly every organ in the body, including the lungs, heart, blood vessels, reproductive organs, mouth, skin, eyes, and bones.

Addiction to nicotine in cigarettes is one of the strongest and most deadly addictions one can have. While cigarette smoking rates have dropped (from 42% in 1965 to 14% in 2019), about 34.1 million Americans smoke cigarettes. Each year, approximately 21.5 million American smokers try to quit, representing more than half of the 34.1 million smokers in the U.S. Only about 2.9 million (7.5%) succeed. An even greater percentage of smokers (68%) report being interested in quitting.

Quitting is hard. It takes commitment and starts with a plan, often takes more than one quit attempt, and requires a lot of support. Getting help through counseling and/or prescription medications can double or triple your chances of quitting successfully. Support is also important. Smoking cessation programs, telephone quit lines, Nicotine Anonymous meetings, self-help materials such as books and pamphlets, and smoking counselors or coaches can be a great help.

Greene County Public Health is partnering with the American Cancer Society, which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to provide support as people make their plan to quit. More information is available at cancer.org/smokeout or by calling 1-800-227-2345.

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“Greene County Public Health is committed to helping the people in our community be healthy and happy,” said Melissa Howell, Health Commissioner at Greene County Public Health. “During this year’s Great American Smokeout®, we hope everyone will join us – and encourage their friends, family and colleagues to join us – in committing or recommitting to year-around, smoke-free lives.”

Greene County Public Health also encourages parents and policy makers to help prevent youth initiation of nicotine addiction by supporting youth prevention efforts in schools and the community, including Point of Sale policies, and secondhand smoke-free multi-unit housing and outdoor spaces.

If you’re struggling with quitting, call Ohio’s Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW for support. For more information on services provided by Greene County Public Health, please call 937-374-5600 or visit the website at www.gcph.info.

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