



Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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Contact: Kara Ruge, Marketing & Public Information Officer, (641) 421-9333

New Year's Resolution to Quit Smoking? Help is Available. *Quitline Iowa offers support.*

(Mason City) - New Year resolutions are common this time of year. Some are easily broken; others are sincerely made, but hard to keep. The decision to eliminate tobacco from your life is a commitment that takes self-control and support. The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health reminds residents who have made the healthy choice to quit smoking, that help and support is available through Quitline Iowa. The no-cost program is offering eight weeks of nicotine replacement therapy - patches, gum or lozenges - to eligible participants.

In Iowa, 433,500 adults smoke. Tobacco is the leading cause of death for Iowans, taking the lives of more than 5,100 adults each year. The estimated annual Iowa health care costs directly associated with smoking use now total \$1.28 billion. Globally, 6 million people die each year due to tobacco-related causes.

"The benefits of stopping the use of tobacco are almost immediate", said Penny McCaslin, Tobacco Program Coordinator, Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health. "According to the American Cancer Society, within 20 minutes, your heart rate and blood pressure drop. Within 12 hours, the carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal. Within two to three months, your circulation improves and your lung function increases. After one year of living tobacco free, the excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a continuing smoker's. Even so, nicotine is an addiction and breaking that addiction can be challenging. Quitline Iowa can provide help."

Quitline Iowa pairs tobacco users with a Quit Coach® to help develop an individualized quitting plan and determine which nicotine replacement therapy is best to help stay tobacco-free. A Quit Coach® also helps by:

- Preparing participants for their quit date
- Providing tips and support to live in a smoke-free environment

Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health • 22 N. Georgia Ave. Suite 300

Mason City, IA 50401 • (641) 421-9300 or Toll Free: 1-888-264-2581

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Web site: www.cghealth.com

- Offering advice and information on medications that may help with withdrawal symptoms

Cerro Gordo County residents can take advantage of the program by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669), or visiting www.quitlineiowa.org to enroll. For local cessation information, please contact the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health at 641-421-9329 or visit www.cghealth.com.

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