



TOBACCO IS KILLING (AND COSTING) US

A Report on Tobacco Use Rates, Smoking-Related Deaths
and Health Care Costs in West Virginia

March 2009

Highlights of this important, updated report:

Smoking remains a leading cause of preventable death and disease in West Virginia and the United States. In recent years, significant successes have been achieved in reducing smoking among youth and implementing clean indoor air policies across the state. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, sustained investments in comprehensive tobacco control programs can decrease smoking prevalence, prevent illnesses, and millions of premature deaths, and save the country billions of dollars.

- 26.9% or 387,000 West Virginia adults are current cigarette smokers.
- 3,800 WV adults (age 35 and older) die each year of smoking-related diseases.
- 1 in 5 WV deaths are caused by cigarette smoking (of adults age 35 and older).
- WV smokers who died lost an average 14 years of life due to premature death.
- Direct health care costs total \$1.3 billion annually in WV.
- Worker productivity losses total \$1.1 billion annually in WV.
- Each WV smoking-related death equals an average of \$288,000 in lost wages.
- These costs total \$2.4 billion annually for West Virginia!
- This equals \$6,236 for each smoker and/or \$1,323 annually for each WV resident.

Despite success reducing youth smoking and adult quitline use, smoking among WV adults remains high. Smoking-related economic costs can be separated into two categories: 1) direct health care costs related to cigarette smoking and 2) productivity losses due to smoking-related deaths.

Division of
WEST VIRGINIA
Tobacco Prevention
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN RESOURCES

For additional information, please call
304.558.2939 or view the report
summary on the Tobacco Prevention
website at: www.wvdt.org