

Communities Putting Prevention to Work

HORRY COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA Tobacco Use Prevention



Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) is an initiative designed to make healthy living easier by promoting environmental changes at the local level. Through funding awarded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2010, a total of 50 communities are working to prevent obesity and tobacco use—the two leading preventable causes of death and disability.

“IT’S CERTAINLY VERY IMPORTANT THAT OUR VISITORS AS WELL AS OUR RESIDENTS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT RESTAURANTS AND ESTABLISHMENTS AND BARS AND HAVE A PLACE TO ENJOY A SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT. IT’S FOR THEIR HEALTH.”

— *Bill Crowther, Spokesperson, Healthy Horry*

Community Overview

Horry County, South Carolina, is tackling tobacco use throughout the community. Horry County is home to approximately 269,000 residents, and Myrtle Beach, a tourist attraction in the county, draws more than 15 million visitors annually. The adult smoking rate in Horry County is 23%, which is higher than the state average of 21%. Of all counties in South Carolina, Horry County has one of the highest teen smoking rates. Further, 17.9% of women in Horry County used tobacco during pregnancy, which is approximately seven percentage points higher than the national average.



Community Successes

If healthy options are not available, then healthy living is not possible. With the support of the *CPPW* initiative, Horry County has implemented a variety of changes throughout the community to make healthy living easier.

To decrease tobacco use, Horry County:

- Supported Horry County Schools, the third largest school district in South Carolina with 51 schools, in implementing a 100% tobacco-free policy. This important environmental change ensures that the 38,206 students and 5,295 staff members are protected from the dangers of secondhand smoke.
- Developed a multifaceted public education initiative that educates residents about the health risks associated with tobacco use. Since the launch of the campaign, use of the South Carolina Tobacco Quitline, 1-800-QUIT-NOW, in Horry County has increased, with 602 residents registering from March 2011 through April 2011. In comparison, 40 residents from Horry County called the quitline in November 2010.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



“I SPEND MY MONEY
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DON'T HAVE THAT DANGER.”

— Tina, Horry County resident

Community Successes *(continued)*

- Encouraged leaders from multiple religious denominations to commit to reducing tobacco use in their congregations and throughout Horry County. Forty-five faith- and community-based organizations representing 11,378 members and 4,240 people under age 18 have joined this effort.
- Supported the development of Healthy Horry, a coalition that educates local residents and leaders about health disparities related to tobacco use and secondhand smoke.
- Adopted a comprehensive smoke-free workplace policy in the town of Atlantic Beach, prohibiting smoking in workplaces, restaurants, and bars. Effective July 2, 2011, the ordinance also includes smoke-free beaches and prohibits smoking within 30 feet of all public buildings.
- Collaborated with local students to support *Rage Against the Haze*, South Carolina's youth-powered tobacco-free movement.

(The list above is a sample of all activities completed by the community.)

Atlantic Beach Now Smoke-free

Residents of and visitors to Atlantic Beach—a popular attraction located among a string of beaches known as the Grand Strand—are now protected from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke exposure. As of May 2, 2011, the community's beaches, beach walkovers, and workplaces, including bars and restaurants within town limits, are smoke-free. Additionally, lodging establishments now limit their “smoking rooms” to no more than 25% of the building's capacity, and individuals cannot smoke within 30 feet of a public building. As a result of these initiatives, an estimated 400 Atlantic Beach residents and some of the 15 million tourists who visit the Grand Strand and enjoy the Atlantic Beach are protected from secondhand smoke.

Leadership Team

The leadership team includes high-level community leaders from multiple sectors, who have the combined resources and capacity to make healthy living easier. Members of Horry County's leadership team are key agents for change in their community. The leadership team includes representatives from the following organizations:

- Alliance for a Healthier Generation
- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association
- Coastal Carolina University
- Horry County Schools
- Shoreline Behavioral Health Services
- South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control

Additional Information

For more information, please visit www.smokefreehorry.org.