

SUCCESS STORY

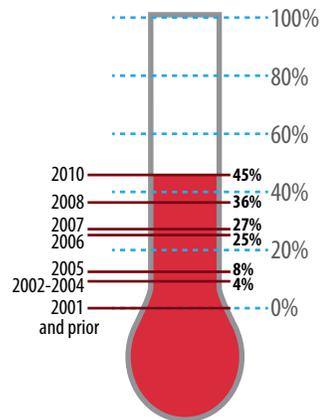
Communities Putting Prevention to Work

Texas

Right to Breathe Healthier Air in Texas by Standing Tall Together

What if you could reduce the leading cause of cancer deaths in Texas¹ simply by having community members standing together? Six coalitions in Texas are working to do just that through community efforts aimed at saving lives.

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Texas.¹ Moreover secondhand smoke harms the young, the old and everyone in between. Currently, numerous nonsmoking Texans are at risk of developing devastating conditions such as lung cancer, heart disease, sudden infant death syndrome, and acute and chronic respiratory infections.² They are exposed to secondhand smoke in public places—something that would not happen if they were protected by a statewide policy that prohibits smoking in all workplaces including restaurants, bars, and other public places.³ Thirty-one cities have adopted comprehensive ordinances prohibiting smoking in all workplaces, restaurants, bars, and other public places.⁴ Many other communities in Texas are also coming together to implement similar ordinances that will provide their community members the same disease prevention protection and freedom from all the negative consequences of secondhand smoke.



Percentage of Texans Protected by Smoke-Free Ordinances Applicable to Workplaces, Restaurants, and Bars⁴

Local efforts that make residents aware of the dangers posed by secondhand smoke and garner community support for smoke-free air are important mile markers on the road to eliminating involuntary exposure to secondhand smoke throughout the state.⁵ The Lufkin Coalition is one of six Texas local coalitions that receives funding and technical assistance from the state tobacco control program (TCP), with funding support from Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) 2-year cooperative agreements. They received technical assistance from the University of Texas at Austin on local evaluation tools and Texans Standing Tall (a statewide coalition) on strategies grounded in the Strategic Prevention Framework.⁶ This framework promotes community mobilization, the use of local data collection to educate on the dangers of secondhand smoke, promotes telephone quitline to help current smokers quit, and monitors tobacco-related policies at work sites and in municipalities.

The Lufkin Coalition uses data generated from local surveys to inform their work. In this effort, the Lufkin Coalition achieved the following milestones:

- A local key opinion leader survey was conducted with 2,000 residents demonstrating local support for a reducing exposure to secondhand smoke.
- 138 businesses endorsed community efforts to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke.
- An online monthly newsletter [✉](#) spotlighted smoke-free businesses in Lufkin County.
- Local community members educated key decision makers on the dangers of secondhand smoke, a known carcinogen.²

The State TCP has used CPPW funding to support local community activities, supported by public education initiatives regarding the dangers of secondhand smoke and provided telephone quitline support. This investment in the Lufkin community by the State TCP and CPPW will save lives and money by reducing exposure to secondhand smoke and decreasing smoking rates.^{3,7} It is critical to continue to build momentum and community support towards protecting the citizens of the Lone Star State from the leading cause of preventable disease—tobacco.^{1,2} In this effort, the community members of Lufkin, Texas, stand together to breathe healthier air.



References:

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For more information please contact:

Penny Harmonson, LCDR CPS
Manager, Tobacco Prevention and Control Program
Substance Abuse Services Unit, Mental Health Substance Abuse Division
E-mail: Penny.Harmonson@dshs.state.tx.us
Phone: 512-206-4794
Texas DSHS Tobacco Prevention and Control URL:
<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/tobacco/>

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