



Becoming Tobacco Free!

A publication for employers in Westmoreland County to improve the bottom line in business & in health.

Westmoreland County Cooperative Extension

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YOUR BOTTOM LINE

Question: How does tobacco use increase business costs through lost productivity?

Financial costs when employees smoke:

- Greater absenteeism
- Greater amount of work time on smoke breaks
- Greater health care costs
- Greater life insurance premium costs
- Greater risk of industrial accidents and occupational injuries
- Greater disability costs.

Pacific Center on Health and Tobacco

See the complete report and suggestions on how you can implement a smoke-free workplace at:

http://www.paccenter.org/public/reports_folder/insurance_flier_web.pdf

Tobacco control experts at Westmoreland Cooperative Extension will send a sample smoke free policy for you to review. It includes free help for employees who use tobacco. Call 724-837-1402.

HEALTH ALERT

Because of evidence that **even short-term exposure to secondhand smoke can trigger heart attacks**, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advised persons with heart disease to avoid indoor settings where smoking is allowed. A study published in The British Medical Journal found that the number of heart attacks reported in Helena, Montana, fell by 40 percent in the six-month period in 2002 when the city's smoke-free law was in effect.



Help is only a phone call away.

Westmoreland Quitline – 1-888-NO-HABIT

Callers will receive information on local classes and brief "How to Quit" counseling. Businesses will receive information about free workplace "Quit Tobacco" programs.

PA FREE Quitline: 1-877-724-1090 Callers receive information and up to five free telephone counseling sessions.

FREE WELLNESS PROGRAM - "KNOWING WHEN TO QUIT"

Latrobe Area Hospital offers, on your site, a free, one hour program for your employees and family members who are THINKING about quitting. Call Connie Magdic, RN, LAH cessation counselor, at 724-537-1615.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY JAIL GETTING READY FOR SMOKE-FREE POLICY!

John Walton, warden of the county prison, has arranged for Southwestern PA Human Services Behavioral Health to offer smoking cessation programs for staff and inmates. On October 1, 2004 the prison will be smoke-free.

WHO HEAD START HAS MODEL POLICY!

Kudos to Westmoreland Human Opportunities Head Start Program. The Greensburg based agency has established a NO-SMOKE ZONE 20 feet from the entrance so non-smokers and children do not have to walk through a smokey area. Additionally, smokers are asked to wait at least five minutes after smoking before entering the building.

FLORIDA: A BREATH OF FRESH PROFIT!

"Some restaurants predicted that profits would turn to ashes if Florida voters approved a smoke-free workplace initiative in 2002, but a new study proves that the prediction was wrong."

According to the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research, restaurant sales are up seven percent a year after the law took effect. *Palm Beach Post, 7/4/04*

LOW TAR CIGARETTES ARE NOT LOWER RISK

Low-tar cigarettes do not carry a lower risk of lung cancer according to a study carried out by Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the American Cancer Society. Scientists suspect that smokers of "light and low tar" cigarettes compensate by taking deeper drags, holding the smoke longer, and smoking more cigarettes. *British Medical Journal*