



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 24, 2012  
Contact: Laurie Thomas, thomasl@azdhs.gov, (480) 540-6050

## **5TH ANNIVERSARY OF ARIZONA SMOKE-FREE ACT: A SUCCESS STORY**

This year, “World No Tobacco Day”, – celebrated May 31 – will be a date of special significance for Arizonans. It helps mark the five-year anniversary of the Smoke-Free Arizona Act, a landmark voter initiative that prohibits smoking in most enclosed public places.

Within the past five years, Arizona has been a national leader in reducing tobacco use. In fact since the Act became effective in 2007, an estimated 230,000 Arizonans have quit using tobacco. We’ve seen almost a 25 percent drop in smoking. Moreover, a 2010 statewide survey showed that more than 80 percent of Arizonans and 70 percent of business owners appreciate smoke-free laws.

“The people have truly responded to the Act,” said Harmony Duport, Office of Inspection and Compliance Chief at Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS). “We went from thousands of inquiries and complaints the first year to a little over 100 a month last year. Both business owners and the general public seem comfortable with the Act.”

Arizona’s three-pronged approach – smoke-free laws, the high cost of tobacco and effective prevention and cessation programs – has proved successful in reducing the tobacco burden in Arizona.

“Proactive tobacco policies in Arizona have been key to major reductions in tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke,” said Wayne Tormala, Bureau of Tobacco and Chronic Disease Chief at ADHS. “That in turn will bring dramatic reductions in disease and healthcare spending.”

Fiscal estimates of almost a quarter-million people quitting tobacco put savings in workplace productivity, pre-mature deaths, and direct medical expenses at more than \$1.4 billion over the remainder of their lifetimes.

“The health prognosis of a smoker, no matter how long they have been smoking, is immediately improved the moment they stop smoking and continues to improve over time,” said Bill Pfeifer, CEO of American Lung Association of the Southwest. “Tobacco is at the root of so many preventable diseases.”

The good news for those who want to quit is they are not alone. The ADHS ASHLine is here to help. The ASHLine has one of the best success rates of all quitlines in the country – providing support on the telephone, online and through Smart Phones.

We celebrate World No Tobacco Day by recognizing the success of the Smoke-Free Act and by continuing the unbeatable combination of effective public policy and a state-of-the-art ASHLine.

## SAVE THE DATE

- What: News Conference
- Who: TRUST Commission members – Bill Pfeifer, President and CEO of the American Lung Association of the Southwest; Sharlene Bozack, Chief Government Relations Officer, American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN); Matt Madonna, TRUST Commissioner; and Harmony Duport, Office of Inspection and Compliance Chief at Arizona of Health Services, discuss the landmark law passed five years ago that prohibited smoking in most enclosed public places in Arizona
- When: World No Tobacco Day  
Thursday, May 31  
11 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
- Where: Arizona Department of Health Services  
150 N. 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Room 345A  
Phoenix, AZ 85007

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### About Arizona Smokers' Helpline

Funded by the state tax on tobacco products through the Bureau of Tobacco and Chronic Disease at the Arizona Department of Health Services, the Arizona Smokers' Helpline is the statewide cessation program located at the University of Arizona Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health. Both the Helpline and ASHLine.org have been helping people quit tobacco since 1995. Free telephone and web-based quit services are provided to all Arizonans free of charge. For information, call 1-800-55-66-222 or visit [www.ASHLine.org](http://www.ASHLine.org).

### About Smoke-Free Arizona Act

In November of 2006, the citizens of Arizona passed the Smoke-Free Arizona Act A.R.S. 36-601.01. This landmark statute prohibits smoking in most enclosed public places and places of employment. In 2010, Arizona earned an "A" grade on the *American Lung Association State of Tobacco Control Report* for maintaining a strong and comprehensive enforcement program of the Smoke-Free Arizona Act. For the third year in a row, the report has awarded a grade "A" recognizing the continued success of the Smoke-Free Arizona Act.

### About the TRUST

The Tobacco Revenue Use, Spending and Tracking (TRUST) Commission is charged with providing advice to the Arizona Department of Health Services on the use of tobacco tax funds for tobacco prevention and cessation, as well as the prevention and management of the leading causes of disease-related death, including heart disease, lung disease, cancer, and stroke.