



State of Wisconsin
Department of Health Services

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ADULT SMOKING IN WISCONSIN HITS RECORD LOW

Youth access to tobacco products also declines in the state

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) announced today that the state’s adult smoking rate is at the lowest rate ever recorded in Wisconsin. The adult smoking rate is at 18%, a two percent drop from 2012, and is consistent with the national smoking rate of 17.8% recently announced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The data from the Wisconsin Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey (BRFSS) also shows that smoking rates remain high among specific groups. For example, the survey found that 33% of Wisconsin residents who are low income or have less than a high school degree still smoke.

“The drop in adult smoking shows that tobacco prevention and control efforts in Wisconsin are paying off,” said Karen McKeown, State Health Officer. “However, these numbers also show that more needs to be done to help our most vulnerable citizens avoid this deadly addiction.”

Meanwhile, sales of tobacco to underage youth also declined in 2014 to 6.4%; down from 7.3% in 2013. The Department credits responsible retailers and available resources for that decline.

“We thank our retailers for not selling tobacco products to minors. By doing so, they are making a difference in the lives of our young people and our communities,” McKeown said. “However, we know we can do even better in Wisconsin, and we encourage all tobacco retailers to take advantage of the free training resources provided at www.smokecheck.org.”

In addition, the 2014 Youth Tobacco Survey (YTS) by the UW-Milwaukee Center for Urban Initiatives and Research found that while youth smoking was down, the use of smokeless tobacco products among high school youth increased from 6% in 2012 to nearly 10% in 2014. The study also found that the use of e-cigarettes by Wisconsin high school students was 75% higher than the national average.

Resources are available for Wisconsin residents who want to quit tobacco, including the Wisconsin Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800 QUIT NOW, which offers free help and medications. Since 2001, the Quit Line has fielded more than 200,000 calls.

For information about the Wisconsin Tobacco Prevention and Control Program, visit:
<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/tobacco/TobaccoAddTreatment.htm>

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