

# Creating BETTER HEALTH TOGETHER by striving for a tobacco-free generation

## The burden of tobacco use in Minnesota

**#1 TOBACCO USE IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF PREVENTABLE DEATH<sup>1</sup>**

**\$3.2 BILLION EXCESS MEDICAL COSTS EACH YEAR<sup>1</sup>**

**6,312 DEATHS EACH YEAR<sup>1</sup>**

## We've made historic progress!

Both youth and adult smoking rates are the lowest ever recorded in our state.



## SHIP is making an impact

SHIP grantees are working to reduce secondhand smoke exposure and access to commercial tobacco<sup>4</sup> products in their communities. Through these efforts, they are helping to provide Minnesotans with smoke-free homes and reducing the likelihood that young people will even start using commercial tobacco products.

- **435** communities across the state are working with SHIP grantees on tobacco-free living strategies, reaching nearly 3 million Minnesotans.
- **129** properties implemented a smoke-free housing policy, protecting **14,000** Minnesotans from secondhand smoke exposure in their homes.
- **3** communities passed a point of sale policy, which increased the licensing fees for tobacco retailers and prohibited free sampling of tobacco products.
- **41** SHIP grantees are working with public housing authorities (PHAs) in their communities to implement smoke free housing and provide linkages to free cessation resources.

SHIP Data: 2015-2016

<sup>1</sup> Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota. 2017 Health Care Costs and Smoking in Minnesota: The Bottom Line

<sup>2</sup> ClearWay Minnesota and Minnesota Department of Health (2015). Tobacco Use in Minnesota: 2014. Minneapolis. <http://www.mnadulttobaccosurvey.org>

<sup>3</sup> Minnesota Department of Health (2014). Teens and Tobacco Use in Minnesota, 2014 Update. <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/tobacco/teentobaccoexecsumm110614.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Tobacco refers to commercial tobacco and not traditional tobacco used for ceremonial purposes by American Indians.

## There's more work to do

While smoking rates have declined in recent years, more work is needed to prevent youth use, reduce secondhand smoke exposure, help current smokers quit and eliminate inequities for communities that suffer disproportionately from tobacco-related death and disease.

Despite substantial increases in smoke-free environments over the past two decades, over 35 percent of Minnesota adults—nearly 1.5 million people—are still exposed to secondhand smoke; this is especially true for those with low incomes.<sup>5</sup>

More kids are also using new and flavored products, like e-cigarettes. Nicotine, which is found in those products, is highly addictive and harmful to the adolescent brain.



## SHIP in action

Secondhand smoke is dangerous and contains 70 known carcinogens. Avoiding secondhand smoke in apartments can be difficult. It can travel within complexes and common areas through doorways, electrical lines, ventilation systems and plumbing.

D.W. Jones, one of the largest property management companies in northern Minnesota, is taking steps to protect residents from the dangers of secondhand smoke in their homes.

Their staff worked with the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership and the American Lung Association to develop a new company-wide smoke-free policy.

D.W. Jones, with more than 110 rental properties, over 3,000 rental units and thousands of residents, knows that eliminating secondhand smoke benefits its residents' health. The residents they serve often suffer from the highest health disparities related to tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke. Their residents will now have cleaner, safer air to breathe in their homes.

Smoke-free policies also help reduce the risk of smoking-related fires as well as turnover costs related to cigarette residue, burns and odor.

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Survey Questionnaire. Atlanta, Georgia: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014.