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Colorado Celebrates Two Years of the Clean Indoor Air Act
Interactive Timeline Shows Significant Progress With Smoke-Free Living

DENVER – Two years after taking effect, the Colorado Clean Indoor Air Act is helping residents and visitors experience significantly healthier environments. In January, casinos joined the list of public places included in the smoke-free law, allowing employees and patrons of most public places to breathe easier with improved air quality.

To mark the two-year anniversary of the Colorado Clean Indoor Air Act, and the vast accomplishments in the movement toward smoke-free environments in Colorado and around the world, Smoke Free Colorado has created an embeddable, interactive timeline that can be viewed on the “Media and PR” page at www.smokefreecolorado.com or at www.vimeo.com/schenkein. The timeline was designed to be easily shared on blogs, social networking and other online media Web sites.

Some of the highlights included in the timeline are the results of several indoor air quality studies. Only two months after casinos went smoke-free, a study by the State Tobacco Education & Prevention Partnership (STEPP) found that the overall air quality in casinos had improved by 92 percent. STEPP conducted a similar study last year after the original smoke-free law went into effect and found that air pollution in hospitality venues, including bars and restaurants, had improved by nearly 70 percent. The most dramatic improvement was seen in bars and taverns, where air quality improved by 90 percent. The significant changes in both casinos and other hospitality venues brought the EPA ratings for both environments from “unhealthy” to “good” air quality.

“Coloradoans and visitors have been able to enjoy significantly healthier indoor environments since the smoke-free law went into effect two years ago,” said R.J. Ours, director of government relations for the American Cancer Society – Great West Division. “Businesses around the state have made a commitment to public health, and for that we encourage everyone to continue to support these hospitality venues.”

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in Colorado, where 17.9 percent of adults smoke. Smoke-free laws are proving to be an effective way to improve public health by reducing people's exposure to secondhand smoke, which has been shown to be harmful to both adults and children and causes more than 50,000 deaths per year in the U.S. In fact, the Surgeon General issued a report last year that concludes that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke and that eliminating smoking in indoor places protects everyone from secondhand smoke exposure.

Colorado offers several resources to smokers who want to quit. The Colorado Quitline, 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784- 8669), is a free telephone coaching service that supports smokers through the quitting process and offers free nicotine patches. Smokers who use the QuitLine along with the patch are nine times more likely to have a successful quit compared to those smokers quitting on their own.

Colorado was the 13th state to implement a smoke-free law. As of April 1, 27 states, along with Puerto Rico and Washington D.C., have laws in effect that require 100 percent smoke-free workplaces and/or restaurants and/or bars.

Smoke-Free Colorado is a statewide coalition of health and community organizations including the American Heart Association, American Lung Association, American Cancer Society, GASP of Colorado (Group to Alleviate Smoking Pollution), Colorado Tobacco Education and Prevention Alliance and the State Tobacco Education & Prevention Partnership.

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