



LUNGFORCE.ORG

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION IN CALIFORNIA
 1531 I STREET, SUITE 201, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
 phone: 916.554.5864 | fax: 916.442.8585

State of Tobacco Control Report to be Released January 21, 2015

Report will include tobacco control grades for all 58 counties in California

Dear County Board of Supervisors:

We are pleased to announce the upcoming release of the 13th annual American Lung Association *State of Tobacco Control* report on January 21, 2015. This report assigns grades to the federal government and states based on their tobacco control laws and regulations in effect as of January 2, 2015 for Smokefree Air, Tobacco Taxes, Tobacco Prevention and Control Program Funding, and Access to Cessation Services.

In conjunction with the national report, the American Lung Association in California will release tobacco control report cards for all 482 incorporated cities and towns and 58 counties in California. This year, the American Lung Association in California has developed a new grading methodology to use for the annual report to better reflect the strong local policies passing throughout the state. Since this report was first released six years ago, the same methodology has been used for grading local cities and counties. The new grading methodology captures best practices as communities adopt stronger, more health-protective policies that will improve the wellbeing of California residents.

In the new methodology, grades are assigned for the following policy categories: Smokefree Outdoor Air, Smokefree Housing, and Reducing Sales of Tobacco Products. These three grades, plus an Emerging Issues bonus point section, are then averaged for one Overall Tobacco Control Grade. The updated grading methodology for the *State of Tobacco Control Report – California Local Grades* may result in jurisdictions receiving adjusted grades.

While we have made enormous progress in the fight against tobacco, it is still the number one cause of preventable death in the United States. Since 1964, we have cut smoking rates by more than half, dramatically reduced exposure to secondhand smoke, reduced rates of lung cancer and other tobacco-related diseases and fundamentally changed public attitudes about tobacco resulting in millions of lives saved. Despite this progress, tobacco remains a dangerous threat, killing almost 40,000 Californians each year, causing illness in even more and costing the state nearly \$22 billion in health care bills and lost productivity. The tobacco industry still designs and manipulates its products to make them as appealing and addictive as possible; spends \$8.8 billion a year -- one million dollars every hour -- on marketing that often attracts kids; and fights every effort to reduce tobacco use. More needs to be done to decrease these numbers and to stop the 21,300 children in California who start smoking each year from picking up this deadly and addictive habit.

Over the past 50 years, we have developed proven strategies that can achieve our public health goals if they are fully and effectively implemented. These strategies are reflected in the grading categories in both the national and local SOTC reports.

We encourage you to visit the American Lung Association in California website www.lung.org/California on January 21 to view the state and local tobacco control report cards and learn how to take action in the fight against tobacco. Visit our About Us page at www.lung.org/california to contact your local American Lung Association office for more information on the impact smoking is taking on your community and what can be done to combat it.

We hope you will join us in the fight to breathe easier.

Olivia J. Gertz
 President & Chief Executive Officer

Kimberly Amazeen
 Vice President, Public Policy & Advocacy

Contact: Kimberly Amazeen, Vice President of Public Policy & Advocacy (916) 585-7670 or Kimberly.Amazeen@lung.org

2015 JAN 20 A 10:25
 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Visit lung.org/california

Watch youtube.com/californialung

Like facebook.com/alacalifornia

Follow twitter.com/californialung