

PRESS RELEASE

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National Latino Tobacco Control Network joins efforts to bring awareness of Tobacco Toxics during Poison Awareness Prevention Month

January is Poison Awareness month! Did you know that Tobacco smoke contains more than 250 deadly poisons, including lead, benzene, arsenic, cyanide, carbon monoxide, and nickel? Tobacco smoke exposure is implicated as a major cause of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), chronic respiratory disease, asthma, ear infections, and lung cancer. Second Hand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable death in the US. It kills 53,300 people, 48,300 of heart disease alone and it causes lung cancer among 3,000 non-smokers. *

Dr. Jeannette Noltenius, National Director of the National Latino Tobacco Control Network (NLTCN) said today: "Latinos die of Lung Cancer more so than of other cancers. Second hand smoke is affecting the lives of Latinos not just where they work, but where they live, in apartment buildings." Just 30 minutes of exposure to SHS causes heart damage similar to that of a habitual smoker, people at risk for heart disease should avoid all indoor places that allow smoking. And now there is more awareness of the dangers of third-hand smoke (referring to the chemicals left impregnated in clothes and furniture inhaled by individuals coming in contact or proximity to those items). Children are largely affected by tobacco poisons because, unlike adults, they are not always aware of these dangers or they do not always have a choice to stay away from smokers or live in smoke free homes.

Dr. Aida McCammon, National Manager of NLTCN and President/CEO of the Indiana Latino Institute, Inc. (ILI) stated that "Localities and States should have comprehensive ordinances and laws which prohibit smoking indoors and exposure to secondhand smoke. Workers should not have to choose between their jobs and their health." Second Hand Smoke is a poison and it should be treated as such. Smokers can get help to quit smoking by calling 1-800-QUITNOW and they will receive counseling and support services, which vary from state to state.

But secondhand smoke is not the only toxic waste produced by smokers. The most commonly discarded piece of waste worldwide happens to be cigarette butts! Cigarette butts meet city and state standards to be labeled as toxic waste. It is estimated that approximately 1.69 BILLION pounds of cigarette butts end up as TOXIC trash each year and that has an adverse impact on the environment (including aquatic creatures, wildlife, pets, and people). We remind you to stay aware of the TOXIC dangers of tobacco!

The National Latino Tobacco Control Network (NLTCN), also known by its Spanish name *Latinos Saludables Sin Tabaco* is a network of over 1,400 health professional, advocates and researchers working together to educate the public, promote policies and programs that will reduce youth initiation, increase number of quitters and protect communities from the dangers of second hand smoke. To obtain more information see: www.latinotobaccocontrol.org

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* www.no-smoke.org