



Article Search

San Gabriel, CA, 8/14/2006

HOME

NEWS

SPORTS

BUSINESS

OPINIONS

ENTERTAINMENT

HEALTH

TRAVEL

INFO

CLASSIFIED A

[Print Article](#)
[Email Article](#)

## County starts anti-smoking effort

*Study: Minorities are lighting up more than ever*

By Christina L. Esparza Staff Writer



A countywide anti-smoking campaign kicked off Wednesday with the release of a study that shows minority men are lighting up more than the county average.

The study by Los Angeles County's Department of Public Health shows smoking among residents is at an all-time low - 14.6 percent.

However, Asian and Latino men are smoking twice as much as their female counterparts at 19.6 percent and 16.6 percent respectively.

"Asian men do tend to smoke more than their non-Asian counterparts," said Nisha Varghese, director of health programs at the San Gabriel-based Asian Youth Center. "Many of the men are immigrants from countries where smoking's the norm."

African-American and white men are also smoking at higher rates than the county average. Nearly 27 percent of African-American men and 16.9 of white men are lighting up.

"Los Angeles County has made great progress in reducing smoking rates and the health burden associated with tobacco addiction," said Dr. Jonathan Fielding, acting director of the county Health Department. "But this survey tells us is that we must continue our efforts so all of our residents can avoid the disease and death caused by tobacco use."

The figures prompted the county, along with several other health and non-smoking advocacy groups, to issue a "cigarette alert" and launch the "It's Quitting Time, L.A!" campaign in an effort to convert 200,000 smokers by 2010, said Linda Aragon, director of the county's Tobacco Control and Prevention Program.

The campaign will include initiatives, having pharmacists refer patients to stop-smoking programs and campaigning in ethnic communities, Aragon said.

Advertisement

"We're also working with physicians to ask patients about their smoking," Aragon said.

Among tools the county will use are information booths at various events, Aragon said. The booths will include a lung-capacity test for smokers and age-progression technology to show what a person would look like if he or she continues to smoke.

The county spends \$4.3 billion a year on smoking-related health problems, most of which are preventable, said Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke.

"Obviously for L.A. County, when we talk about costs, we talk about the cost of health care. We talk about the fact that we have neonatal units that care for babies that, some of those babies would not be there if their mothers

had stopped smoking," Burke said.

Although the county's goal is to get 200,000 people to permanently stub out their cigarettes, Sam Hindi, owner of Baldwin Cigarettes in Baldwin Park, said he doesn't think his business will suffer.

The county, he said, has for years been trying to get people to quit.

"They've been doing it a long time," Hindi said. "If you want to smoke, you're going to smoke."

City News Service contributed to this story.

[christina.esparza@sgvn.com](mailto:christina.esparza@sgvn.com)

(626) 962-8811, Ext. 2472

Have something  
to sell?

[↑ RETURN TO TOP](#)

## More Headlines

- Halt set in battle
- Effects of big quake studied
- Local dairy legend recalled at service
- Bill proposes hefty fines for trunk riders
- Around the Valley
- San Dimas man wins triathlon
- Around the Valley
- Man's slaying remains unsolved
- Escutia defends her bill
- Tour bus drop-offs irk nearby neighborhoods
- Hillside blaze
- City's CEO is back on job
- Tax's expiration prompts Covina to survey residents
- Area enrollment drops
- Border watch gains support

[Copyright Notice](#)  
[Privacy Policy](#)

Copyright © 2006  
Los Angeles Newspaper Group

[Information](#)

[— | MNG Corporate Site Map](#)