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**New Surgeon General's report on smoking marks
50 years of fighting tobacco**

ClearWay MinnesotaSM looks to next steps in reducing tobacco's harm

MINNEAPOLIS (January 17, 2014) – Today, the U.S. Surgeon General's Office will release a new report on smoking and health. The report, which comes 50 years after the first ever Surgeon General's report on smoking, will cover the history of tobacco use over the last half-century, share new findings on health effects from smoking and discuss how to end the continuing tobacco use epidemic.

Released on January 11, 1964, the original Surgeon General's report on smoking and health linked smoking with lung cancer and heart disease for the first time. The report is credited with beginning decades of public health efforts to reduce tobacco use in this country. According to a study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, those efforts have added almost 20 years of longevity to the lives of 8 million Americans by preventing tobacco use and helping individuals quit.

"We've made considerable progress since the first Surgeon General's report, but the impact of tobacco on Minnesotans' health and finances remains staggering," said David Willoughby, Chief Executive Officer of ClearWay Minnesota, a nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing tobacco's harm in Minnesota. "Smoking is still a leading cause of preventable death and disease and costs Minnesota nearly \$3 billion in excess medical costs each year."

Minnesota has long been a key state in U.S. tobacco control efforts. In 1975, it became the first state to enact a Clean Indoor Air Act, which limited smoking in indoor public spaces and mandated "no-smoking" sections in restaurants. In addition, Minnesota's lawsuit against the tobacco companies in the 1990s broke new ground, resulting in heavy legal restrictions on tobacco marketing. The lawsuit also revealed millions of secret tobacco industry documents, which clearly showed intentional deception and targeting of youth.

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“After 50 years, we know so much more about the devastating health effects of smoking,” said Willoughby. “We also know the proven strategies for reducing tobacco’s harm. Smoke-free laws, higher tobacco taxes, access to help quitting, well-funded youth-prevention programs and mass-media campaigns must all work together to have the greatest impact. We’ve made progress, but there is still much work to be done, especially in the face of an aggressive, multi-billion dollar industry that has actively pursued new tobacco users while keeping current customers hooked.”

In Minnesota, approximately 625,000 adults and 77,000 kids are current smokers. All Minnesotans have access to free support to quit smoking through QUITPLAN® Services, a free stop-smoking program funded by ClearWay Minnesota.

About ClearWay MinnesotaSM

ClearWay Minnesota is an independent nonprofit organization that improves the health of Minnesotans by reducing the harm caused by tobacco. ClearWay Minnesota serves Minnesota through its grant-making program, QUITPLAN® stop-smoking services and statewide outreach activities. It is funded with 3 percent of the state’s 1998 tobacco settlement. For more information on ClearWay Minnesota or QUITPLAN Services, call 952-767-1400 or visit clearwaymn.org.

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