

The High Cost of Smoking – On Society

CDC reports that smoking costs society over \$7 per pack of cigarettes in health costs and lost productivity.

Researchers at Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report that every pack of cigarettes sold in the U.S. costs \$3.45 in smoking-related medical expenses and \$3.73 in lost job productivity due to premature death – a total of \$7.18 per pack!

The CDC closely analyzed the more than \$150-billion spent each year on smoking-related healthcare and lost productivity to arrive at the first in-depth look at the per-pack cost of smoking on society. The economic cost was startling, more than previous estimates. The CDC also reported the nation's overall cost of smoking averaged \$3,391 per smoker annually.

According to the report, approximately 22 billion packs of cigarettes are sold in the U.S. each year. An estimated 440,000 premature deaths per year are attributed to smoking – the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S. CDC's acting director, Dr. David Fleming, comments that these nearly half a million lost lives to "smoking-related illnesses is a significant public health tragedy. It's important now more than ever that states and local communities put in place comprehensive tobacco-control programs to stem this tidal wave of preventable deaths."

On average, women lose 14.5 years of life and men lose 13.2 years due to smoking.

Smoking also accounts for over 1,000 infant deaths yearly when women smoke during pregnancy.

CDC's Office on Smoking and Health director, Rosemarie Henson emphasizes, "the stunning toll that smoking takes on life is unacceptable. States and communities can and should do more..." Despite current anti-smoking campaigns and increased taxes, some 2,200 young-people under 18-years become regular smokers *everyday*.

References:

Internet site: www.cdc.gov. (April 2002).

Internet site: www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/pressrel/r020412.htm. (April 2002).