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TOBACCO FREE FLORIDA AND DOH-PINELLAS ENCOURAGED TOBACCO USERS TO QUIT IN NOVEMBER



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In observance of the Nov. 16 **Great American Smokeout (GASO)** sponsored by the American Cancer Society, Tobacco Free Florida and the Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County (DOH-Pinellas) worked with local employer Molex to encourage its employees who use tobacco to create a plan to quit that day.

GASO is an annual event on the Thursday before Thanksgiving that creates awareness about the dangers of smoking and the many effective resources available to help smokers successfully quit.

Molex, based in Pinellas, is a leading provider of electronic components and solutions. On Nov. 16, the company challenged employees who use tobacco to quit for the day. Non-smokers were challenged to quit unhealthy behaviors for the day as well, whether it was candy or coffee, to promote healthy living.

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable disease and death in Florida and the U.S.¹ On average, smokers die 10 years earlier than nonsmokers.² For every person who dies, at least 30 people live with a serious smoking-related illness.³ About 30 percent of cancer deaths in Florida are caused by cigarette smoking.⁴ Smoking not only affects one's health, it also impacts individuals financially. A pack-a-day smoker in Florida can spend more than \$2,100 in just one year and more than \$10,500 in five years.

Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way program makes it easier than ever for tobacco users to access free tools and services to help them quit. More than 159,000 Floridians have successfully quit tobacco using one of these free services. For more information, go to tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway.

Smokers can also access Tobacco Free Florida's online Cost Calculator to find out how much money they could save by quitting at tobaccofreeflorida.com/calculator.

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About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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About Tobacco Free Florida

The department's Tobacco Free Florida campaign is a statewide cessation and prevention campaign funded by Florida's tobacco settlement fund. Since the program began in 2007, more than 159,000 Floridians have successfully quit using one of Tobacco Free Florida's free tools and services. There are now approximately 451,000 fewer adult smokers in Florida than there was 10 years ago, and the state has saved \$17.7 billion in health care costs. To learn more about Tobacco Free Florida's Quit Your Way services, visit [www.tobaccofreeflorida.com](#) or follow the campaign on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/TobaccoFreeFlorida](#) or on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/tobaccofreefla](#).

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.

² Jha P, Ramasundarahettige C, Landsman V, et al. 21st Century Hazards of Smoking and Benefits of Cessation in the United States. *New England Journal of Medicine* 2013;368:341–50 [accessed 2017 Mar 28].

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.

⁴ Lortet-Tieulent J, Goding Sauer A, Siegel RL, Miller KD, Islami F, Fedewa SA, Jacobs EJ, Jemal A. State-Level Cancer Mortality Attributable to Cigarette Smoking in the United States. *JAMA Intern Med.* 2016;176(12):1792-1798.
doi:10.1001/jamainternmed.2016.6530.