

THE LINK

Connecting facts and ideas
for those working to create
an environment in Maine that
supports tobacco-free living.

 Healthy Maine Partnerships
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

SUMMER ISSUE 2011

Smoke-Free Maine Fairs: A Growing Trend

Making more and more places and events smoke-free protects participants from the dangers of secondhand smoke and helps smokers move closer to a decision to quit smoking. The Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine (PTM) has identified fairs and



festivals as candidates for smoke-free policies. Agricultural fairs occur in many towns across Maine and can become smoke-free events, or the grounds can be smoke-free for the entire year for any events that take place there.

For some fairs, the 2010 season was the first time they had to deal with a smoke-free policy to make sure that their outdoor eating and dining areas were smoke-free as a result of new legislation. Other fairs, such as the Farmington Fair, have been working toward a broader smoke-free policy for a longer time.

Continued on page 3

MaineCare Mailing Promotes the Maine Tobacco HelpLine

During April 2011, PTM collaborated with MaineCare's Division of HealthCare Management to mail a packet to all physician practices that work with MaineCare patients.

The packet contained an excerpt from the latest Surgeon General's Report on "How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease," a poster with pull-off information about the Maine Tobacco HelpLine (MTHL), a one-page guide of what costs are covered through MaineCare for tobacco cessation, and an article on using the tobacco treatment intervention from the Public Health Services Guidelines for using the 5A's of tobacco intervention: Ask, Advise, Assess, Assist, Arrange.

The most important information was an explanation of the fax referral system of the MTHL. The MTHL has used the fax referral for several years and has recently been sufficiently staffed to widely promote the fax referral system. The advantage of this system is that when the physician is able to get agreement to refer, the patient will get

Continued on page 2

WHAT'S INSIDE

PTM Awards Youth Advocates	2	FDA to Rule on New Cigarette Pack Labels	6
Nicotine: Nature's Deadly Pesticide	3	Kudos	7
MPOWER: An Effective Strategy to Combat Tobacco Use	4	Tobacco-Free Policy Signs Available	7
Breathe Easy, You're In a Maine State Park or Historic Site	6	Web Links	7

PTM Awards Youth Advocates

The Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine (PTM) strongly values the power of youth voice and the capacity of young people to make a difference within Maine communities. This year, PTM would like to recognize a youth leader and adult advisor who have demonstrated strong leadership and have been outstanding advocates for anti-tobacco issues.

PTM has awarded Melanie Grover of Scarborough High School, Youth Leader of the Year. Melanie is part of the

leadership team of Scarborough High School's Environmental Club, also known as ECOS (Environmental Club of Scarborough).

Melanie has been awarded PTM Youth Leader of the Year for her efforts in the town of Scarborough to

adopt a tobacco-free ordinance for their beaches. Melanie has been dedicated to this project and continually advocated to her peers about the importance of this ordinance. With Melanie's support, the town councilors were able to understand that this issue was a concern for all community members. This effort will result in positive lasting change that will impact their community and environment. Thank you ECOS and especially Melanie for your leadership!



PTM would also like to recognize the first winner of our new Anti-Tobacco Adult Advisor of the Year Award, which is given to a Maine adult who has gone above and beyond to engage youth in advocacy around anti-tobacco issues. This year's winner is Ashley Bracy, Youth Advocacy Program Manager at the Communities Promoting Health Coalition (CPHC). Ashley has both inspired and mentored youth throughout the CPHC region to make significant positive environmental change within their communities. Her

efforts have lead to the town of Gorham adopting a comprehensive tobacco-free municipal recreation policy, and making

all of Gorham's recreation areas tobacco-free. Most recently her work has resulted in the town

of Scarborough adopting a tobacco-free ordinance for all the parks, playgrounds, recreation facilities and beaches just in time for the upcoming beach season. Ashley is the perfect example of an advisor who genuinely empowers and inspires her groups to attain goals that are truly helping to create a tobacco-free Maine.

Congratulations Melanie and Ashley!

a pro-active call from the MHTL. In making a referral, the physician is invested in the treatment process for tobacco addiction, and the patient has only to make the first step to quitting in the doctor's office by signing up for the referral.

MHTL statistics are showing that 57% percent of patients who are referred will enroll in the quit program. The Center for Tobacco Independence (CTI), PTM's contractor for the tobacco treatment initiative, including the Helpline Services, provides training to physician practices by reaching out to them, assisting with office assessments and systems regarding tobacco addiction treatment, and extending CMEs and other credits as appropriate.

Prior to the mailing, PTM met with the MaineCare Physician Advisory Board to discuss materials and methods that could assist physicians in helping their patients quit tobacco use. Physicians described how busy they were and explained that they did not want copious promotional materials. At the meeting they selected what they liked from an array of PTM brochures, etc. which were then included in their packet.

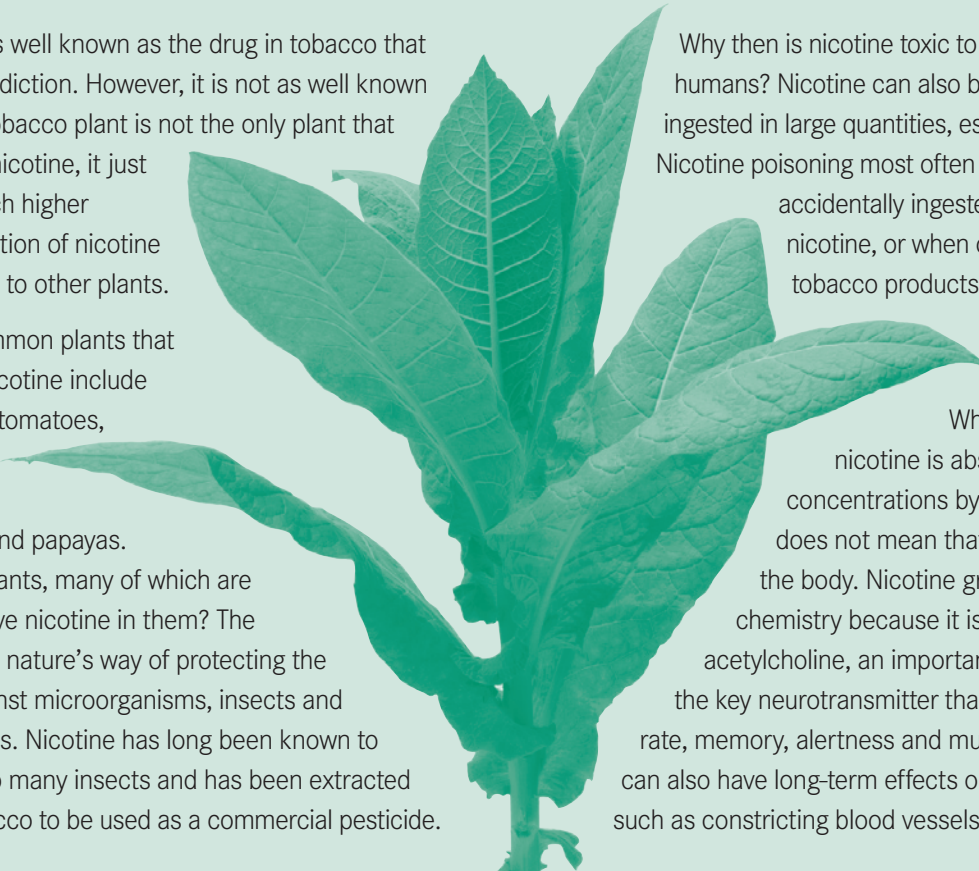


Nicotine: Nature's Deadly Pesticide

Nicotine is well known as the drug in tobacco that causes addiction. However, it is not as well known that the tobacco plant is not the only plant that contains nicotine, it just has a much higher concentration of nicotine compared to other plants.

Other common plants that contain nicotine include potatoes, tomatoes, egg-plants, peppers and papayas.

Why do plants, many of which are edible, have nicotine in them? The nicotine is nature's way of protecting the plant against microorganisms, insects and vertebrates. Nicotine has long been known to be toxic to many insects and has been extracted from tobacco to be used as a commercial pesticide.



Why then is nicotine toxic to insects and not to humans? Nicotine can also be deadly to humans when ingested in large quantities, especially by small children. Nicotine poisoning most often occurs when adults have accidentally ingested insecticides containing nicotine, or when children or pets have eaten tobacco products. Death usually occurs in a matter of minutes from respiratory failure.

When smoked or "chewed," nicotine is absorbed in much lower concentrations by the bloodstream, but this does not mean that there is little change in the body. Nicotine greatly alters the brain chemistry because it is so similar structurally to acetylcholine, an important brain chemical. This is the key neurotransmitter that affects respiration, heart rate, memory, alertness and muscle movement. Nicotine can also have long-term effects on the rest of the body, such as constricting blood vessels.

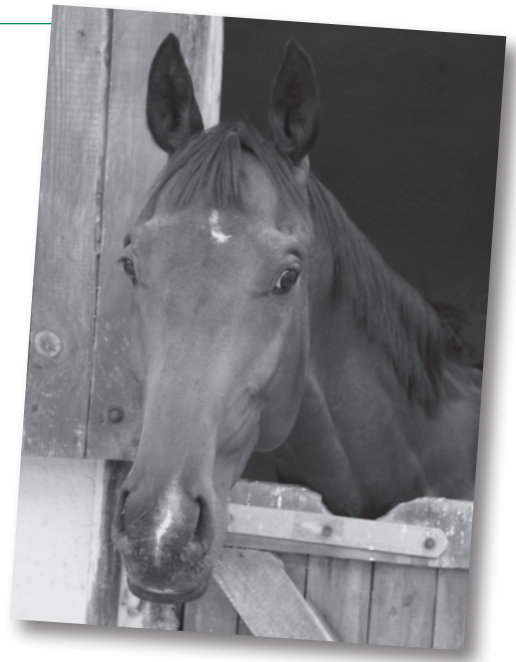
Smoke-Free Maine Fairs *Continued from page 1*

William (Bill) McFarland, President of the Maine Association of Agricultural Fairs, said that the new no-smoking regulations for eating areas were administered smoothly and seemed to be received well by the public. He added that food vendors at the fairs are more and more aware of no-smoking rules and are supportive for the most part.

Mr. McFarland mentioned that no-smoking policies will get increasingly stronger support from the fair association, and they will be encouraged by their leadership through newsletters and e-mails to participate in reducing the health risks from tobacco through policy initiatives. Fairs want smoking to stop

around food and possibly on grounds, or at least limited to designated smoking areas. They will appreciate some assistance in putting policy in place to set these areas up and then in getting appropriate signage to keep grounds smoke-free.

PTM urges HMPs to approach fair leaders and administrators in their areas and to ask them to consider adopting smoke-free policies that are as encompassing as the entire grounds, or to use an incremental plan that takes place over many years. Any efforts that increase the places and events that are smoke-free help to improve the health of Maine people.



MPOWER:

An Effective Strategy to Combat Tobacco Use

MPOWER—it sounds a little bit like the name of a power mower for your lawn, but it's really a six-pronged strategy to combat the world's smoking epidemic. Created by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2008, it contains the most effective tobacco-control strategies proven to reduce and reverse tobacco-related disease and death.

CDC has incorporated WHO's MPOWER approach into its actions at the local, state and national levels. The acronym MPOWER means: **M**onitor, **P**rotect, **O**ffer, **W**arn, **E**nforce, and **R**aise. CDC and WHO believe that MPOWER, along with the CDC *Best Practices*, can go a long way to bringing down the rates of tobacco use globally.

The Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine along with federal, state, and local partners, is committed to using MPOWER through: **monitoring** the tobacco epidemic and prevention policies; **protecting** people from secondhand smoke where they live, learn, work and play; **offering** quit assistance to current smokers; **warning** about the dangers of tobacco; **enforcing** comprehensive restrictions on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship; and **raising** taxes and prices on tobacco products.

Monitoring and maintaining core surveillance systems through evalua-

tion is important. As outlined in CDC's *Best Practices*, a comprehensive tobacco control program must have a system of surveillance and evaluation that can monitor and document short-term, intermediate and long-term intervention outcomes in the population. This helps to inform program and policy directions, as well as to ensure accountability to those with fiscal oversight. Therefore, it is very important to establish sound baselines on key indicators so that real change can be measured. Although change is what evaluation looks for, documenting lack of change can also be a reason for intervention.

Protecting people from secondhand tobacco smoke is another strategy and has a focus on populations with disparities. There is no safe level of secondhand smoke exposure. Protecting people from secondhand smoke includes smoke-free laws in indoor and outdoor spaces,

especially in schools and places where youth gather.

Offering help to quit tobacco can be accomplished in multiple ways, by sustaining, expanding and promoting services such as the Maine Tobacco HelpLine, and by increasing the coverage of treatment under both public and private insurance. Quitting tobacco can reduce the risk of tobacco-related disease even among those who have used tobacco for decades. In addition to effective clinical approaches to helping smokers quit, there are several population-based approaches that have proven to be effective including price increases and smoke-free laws.

Warn about the danger of tobacco. Health communication interventions are powerful tools to prevent initiation, promote cessation and shape social norms. Effective messages can stimulate public support and create a supportive climate for policy change. Terry Pechacek, Associate Director for Science at CDC, says, "We want our stuff talked about either positive or negative." He believes that children are key to getting a message heard, and that youth participation can create some of the best media coverage and encourages getting youth involved in tobacco. In doing so, earned media becomes a very important part of the equation.

mpower

Enforcing bans on tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship is especially important in the retail setting. Retail stores are controlled by the tobacco industry through contracts with the stores. This is the place where new products emerge and where price promotions take place. The tobacco industry spends billions of dollars each year on tobacco advertising and most of it is done in retail stores. In fact, this is the industry's primary communication channel. Nonsmoking adolescents exposed to tobacco advertising and promotional campaigns are significantly more likely to become young adult smokers.

Raising taxes on tobacco is the highest level of social change that



Using the six strategies presented in MPOWER will help to make tobacco less desirable, less acceptable, and less accessible in Maine.

can be made. Raising taxes reduces youth tobacco use and initiation, reduces adult tobacco use, reduces tobacco consumption in general and increases cessation. The impact of raising the tobacco tax is even greater if part of the revenue goes to tobacco control and cessation services.

Community resources must be the foundation of sustained solutions to pervasive problems like tobacco use. MPOWER along with CDC's *Best Practices* are complementary tools for establishing, implementing and evaluat-

ing effective tobacco control programs. CDC's *Best Practices*' recommendations clearly outline the program structure for implementing evidence-based comprehensive tobacco control programs, and the framework for recommended levels of state investment to reduce tobacco use in each state. Using the six strategies presented in MPOWER will help to make tobacco less desirable, less acceptable and less accessible in Maine.

More specific guidance on evidence-based and highly effective interventions can be found in the full MPOWER report www.who.int/tobacco/mpower/mpower_report_full_2008.pdf.

Breathe Easy, You're In a Maine State Park or Historic Site!

Maine State Parks provide residents and tourists alike with spectacular access to the outdoors. From the mountains to the seashore, the parks and historic sites provide affordable experiences that are as diverse and varied as the people who come to enjoy them.

Over 48 state parks and historic sites are under the management of the State of Maine's Department of Conservation's Bureau of Parks and Lands. Over two million people visit these sites annually and the majority of the visitors are from Maine.

The Maine State Parks Passport began last summer and adds to the enjoyment of Maine's great outdoors. Visit any Maine state park or historic site from May 29 through the end of September

and look for the brown passport station to get your passport. Using the Passport is fun and easy. Just as with a real passport, each stamp shows where a participant has been. The more stamps you acquire the more free stuff you win. To learn more go to www.maine.gov/doc/passportindex.shtml.

The Maine State Park Passport encourages Maine families and summer visitors to explore more of Maine's parks and historic sites by providing an incentive to fill up the pages with stamps. And, the whole experience is now even more healthful than it was just a few years

ago, because, by law, smoking is now prohibited at all Maine state park beaches, group shelters, buildings and common areas.

Enjoy that clean, clear Maine fresh air this summer and get that Passport stamped. With 48 stamps from each and every site, you win a free season pass for next year!



FDA to Rule on **New Cigarette Pack Labels**

With the passage of the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act on June 22, 2009, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) was given the authority to regulate the manufacturing, distribution and marketing of tobacco products to protect public health.

Among the many things that have occurred in the first two years include the ban of flavored cigarettes, the ban on tobacco products with misleading terms such as "light, mild, or low," and the awarding of state enforcement grants to prevent sales of tobacco to minors. The latest major event is the final ruling on new colored graphic warning labels for cigarette packages on the two-year anniversary of the law (June 22, 2011). These changes will take effect in September 2012.

**For more information and updates please visit
<http://www.fda.gov/TobaccoProducts>.**

Kudos!

Kudos to **Eastern Maine Medical Center** who are celebrating ten years of a tobacco-free environment! EMMC became a national leader a decade ago as they worked with St. Joseph's Hospital in Bangor to establish their comprehensive policy. Now many other hospitals across the state and the nation are following their example. Great work, EMMC!

Tobacco-Free Policy Signs Available

Strong tobacco-free policies are an essential piece in discouraging youth from starting to use tobacco, encouraging adults to quit, improving health by preventing exposure to secondhand smoke and changing the social norms regarding tobacco (making tobacco less desirable, less acceptable, and less accessible). School and community recreation policies that send strong, clear and consistent tobacco-free messages are an important part of preventing youth from starting to use tobacco.

The Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine (PTM) provides no-cost metal signs to school systems and community recreation programs that submit documentation to PTM that the school or recreation program meets the PTM criteria for being a tobacco-free environment. These signs are able to be viewed on the PTM online store (www.ptmstore.org) but cannot be ordered on the website. PTM must be contacted directly for approval to receive the metal signage.

For details on the process needed to comply with PTM criteria and to be eligible for no-cost metal signs regarding the school policies, please refer to item #907 "School Policy Books," on the online store or contact Michelle Ross at michelle.ross@maine.gov. For details about the community recreation policies, please refer to item # 329 "Tobacco-Free Area Recreation Kit" (currently being updated and will be available in summer 2011) or contact Garth Smith at garth.smith@maine.gov.



Searching for the latest data? Check out these helpful links:

Tobacco Control State Highlights 2010 available at:
http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/state_data/state_highlights/2010/index.htm

Tobacco Control State Highlights 2010: Surveillance & Evaluation Supplement at:
http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/state_data/state_highlights/2010/supplement/index.htm

These include information on the burden of tobacco use and the strategies that have the most impact on reducing tobacco use and preventing initiation of use. Many of the data sources used are new to tobacco control. The second document provides more detailed information about the Highlights indicators and discusses measurement and evaluation considerations relevant to interpreting the findings.

IN THIS
ISSUE OF

THE **LiNK**

- Smoke-Free Fairs
- MPOWER
- Nicotine

The Link is published by the Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine (PTM).
The mission of PTM is to reduce death and disability from tobacco use among Maine residents
by creating an environment supportive of a tobacco-free life. For more information,
visit us at www.tobaccofreemaine.org or contact us at (207) 287-4627.




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