



## STATE OF OKLAHOMA

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### **Helpline Available for Keeping New Year's Resolutions**

**OKLAHOMA CITY** – As the New Year approaches, the Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust is encouraging all Oklahomans interested in quitting tobacco to call the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for free cessation assistance. The New Year is one of the most popular times of the year for smokers to quit, usually to improve their health or for the sake of their loved ones.

The Helpline's professional "Quit Coaches" work with callers to determine their readiness to quit, assist them in developing a quit plan based on their individual needs, and schedule up to four additional telephone-based sessions to improve their chances of success.

"In addition to the free coaching sessions, free nicotine patches or gum are available for participants who are uninsured or on Medicare," said Tracey Strader, executive director of the Trust. "Quit Coaches assist other callers to identify and access pharmacy benefits that may be available to them through their employer, Medicaid, or other insurance."

Treatment of nicotine dependence is considered to be the "gold standard" of cost-effective interventions. Based on cost per year of life saved, tobacco dependence treatment is more cost-effective than virtually all other preventive health programs, including mammography, colon cancer screening and pap tests.

Serving nearly 14,000 Oklahomans in 2005, the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline is supported primarily by earnings from the Oklahoma Tobacco Settlement Endowment Trust with assistance from state tobacco tax funds made available through the Oklahoma State Department of Health.

The Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline's hours of operation are 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. seven days a week, and staff will return any messages left after hours. For more information about the Helpline, please see: <http://www.tset.ok.gov/programs/helpline.html>.

"It can be hard to quit but free help is available whenever you're ready to call," said Strader.

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