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Cigarettes can not get lit at Gabriel

Gabriel Ride Control is kicking butt and clearing the air.

As of Oct. 1, Gabriel Ride Control, in partnership with the Interagency and Community Coalition of Grady County (ICCGC), has become a tobacco-free campus.

Workers were leaving cigarette butts on the property and were not responding to warnings, Gabriel Human Resources Representative, Marletta Bell, said. The company went a step further and decided to help its employees quit.

Breanna Russell, Program Coordinator for ICCG, said that Gabriel contacted the coalition last spring to see what they could do to create a tobacco-free environment.

There was a kickoff celebration on Sept. 28 for Gabriel employees. ICCGC attended the event and passed out promotional materials and quick tip baggies, which contained gum, nail files, stress balls and rubber bands.

This replacement-therapy goodie bag was designed to give tobacco users something to do with their hands and mouths besides reaching for a smoke.

By contacting the Tobacco Helpline, 1-800-QUITNOW, ex-nicotine users were also able to get the first round of nicotine patches and/or gum for free.

ICCG donated "breathe easy" signs to the site. Custom Gabriel signs are coming soon.

Russell said that it speaks volumes about the company and Grady County to lead the way in the pursuit of a more healthy workplace, since Gabriel is one of the largest companies in Chickasha.

Oklahoma is the 48th unhealthiest state in the nation, Russell said, with tobacco use and obesity being the two largest variables.

The tobacco-free campus correlates with Gabriel's health and wellness program. The company has been releasing tips, suggestions and encouragement to quit to workers who are tobacco users.

While not everyone has been happy with the change—some workers are determined that they want to smoke—employees have been proactive in the program.

"There have been several success stories," Bell said.

The tobacco-free campus means that there is not tobacco use of any kind, including e-cigarettes and smoking in cars, on the Gabriel campus.



Gabriel Ride Control recently became a tobacco-free work space. Gabriel is one of the first businesses in Chickasha to eliminate cigarettes on their campus.

Gabriel has tried to encourage employees, Bell said, as well as provide support. Since the ban took place, they have provided candy and gum for the workers so that there is always some on hand.

Workers who are caught using tobacco products on the Gabriel may face disciplinary action, just as with any other company policy, Bell said.

Since Oct. 1, there have been only two verbal warnings out of 312 full and part time employees.

Gabriel Ride Control build shocks and struts as well as service light and commercial vehicle aftermarket.