

# TOBACCO IS KILLING (AND COSTING) US

## A Report on Tobacco Use Rates, Smoking-Related Deaths, and Smoking-Related Health Care Costs in West Virginia

### Report Summary

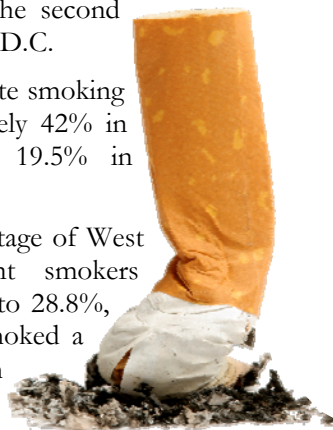
March 2009

The West Virginia Division of Tobacco Prevention (WVDTP) collaborates with state and federal partners to promote tobacco use prevention, cessation, and smoke-free air in West Virginia schools, businesses, health care settings, and communities. In recent years, significant successes have been achieved in reducing smoking among youth and implementing clean indoor air policies across the state. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, sustained investments in comprehensive tobacco control programs can decrease smoking prevalence, prevent millions of premature deaths, and save the country billions of dollars. WVDTP and the West Virginia Health Statistics Center collaborated to publish *Tobacco Is Killing (and Costing) Us* in 2002 and 2005 to outline the burden of tobacco use in West Virginia. This summary presents key findings from the third edition of this report, to be published in March 2009.

## Cigarette Smoking

West Virginia continues to have one of the highest rates of cigarette smoking in the country. Despite successes in reducing smoking among West Virginia youth, there have yet to be any declines in smoking among West Virginia adults.

- In 2007, approximately 26.9% or 387,000 West Virginia adults were current cigarette smokers – the second highest rate among the 50 states and D.C.
- In the years 2002-2006, adult cigarette smoking ranged from a high of approximately 42% in Wyoming County to a low of 19.5% in Monongalia County.
- Between 2000 and 2007, the percentage of West Virginia youth who are current smokers significantly decreased from 38.5% to 28.8%, while the percentage who never smoked a cigarette significantly increased from 25.7% to 38.9%.



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## Smoking-Related Deaths

Cigarette smoking harms nearly every organ in the body and causes 443,000 deaths each year in the United States.<sup>1</sup> Smoking causes heart disease and has been linked to at least 80 percent of deaths from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and 30 percent of all cancer deaths (including 80 percent of lung cancer deaths).

In each year 2002 – 2006:

- An average of 3,785 West Virginians age 35 and older died each year of diseases related to cigarette smoking.
- About 19% of all deaths (or nearly 1 in 5 deaths) of adults age 35 and older were caused by cigarette smoking.
- The percentage of deaths caused by smoking ranged from a high of nearly 23% in Lincoln County to a low of 14% in Pendleton County.

Cause of Death	WV Average Annual Deaths
Smoking-Related Cancers	1,531
Smoking-Related Heart Diseases	1,190
Smoking-Related Lung Diseases	1,064
<b>Total Smoking-Related Deaths</b>	<b>3,785</b>

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<sup>1</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Smoking-attributable mortality, years of potential life lost, and productivity losses – United States, 2000-2004. MMWR 2008; 57(45): 1226-8.

<sup>2</sup>Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Cigarette smoking among adults – United States, 2007. MMWR 2008; 57(45): 1221-6.

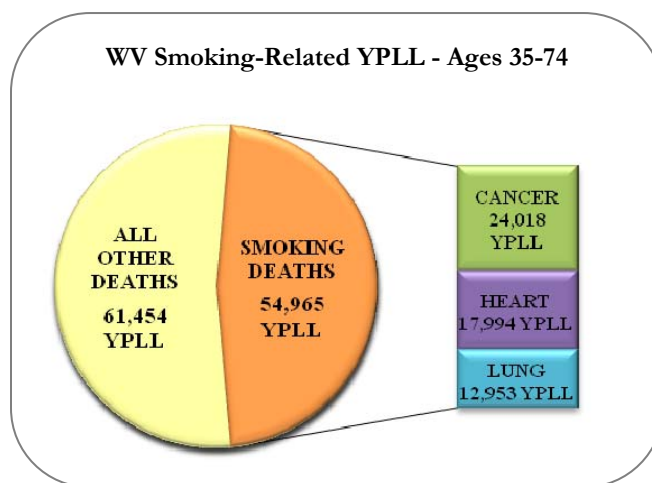
<sup>3</sup>Smoking-related deaths and productivity losses due to smoking-related deaths were calculated by the Smoking-Attributable Mortality, Morbidity, and Economic Costs (SAMMEC) program developed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL)

Smoking remains a leading cause of preventable death and disease in West Virginia and the United States. In fact, nearly half of the 44.5 million Americans who smoke will die prematurely of tobacco-related disease.<sup>4</sup> YPLL is a measure of the number of years of life lost due to death before the age of 75 and is an indicator of premature and preventable mortality.

In each year 2002 – 2006:

- An average of 8,400 West Virginia adults age 35-74 died, resulting in 116,400 years of potential life lost before the age of 75.
- An average of nearly 55,000 years of potential life were lost among adults age 35-74 due to premature death caused by cigarette smoking. This equals 47% of all years of potential life lost among this group.
- Every smoker who died lost on average of 14 years of life due to premature death.



<sup>4</sup>*Ending the Tobacco Problem; A Blueprint for the Nation*, National Academies Press, Washington, DC; May, 2007.

<sup>5</sup>Smoking-related direct health care costs were calculated using two economic models developed by Vincent Miller et al. (Model 1) and Leonard Miller et al. (Model 2) applied to estimated health care expenditures for the state from the Health Care Financing Administration. Model 1 estimated direct health care costs at \$891 million and Model 2 estimated costs to be \$1.3 billion.

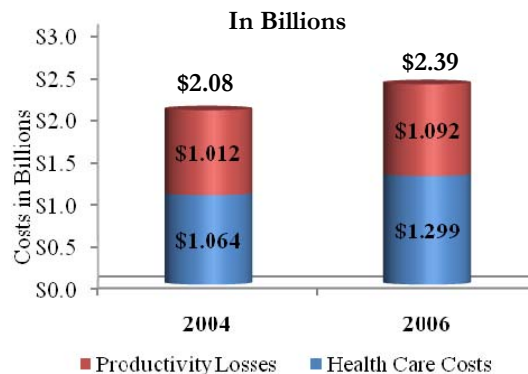
<sup>6</sup>The smoking-related costs presented in this report do not include the costs of productivity losses due to morbidity from smoking-related illness, nor do they include the costs of health care or productivity losses due to other forms of tobacco (e.g., smokeless tobacco, cigars, and pipes) and secondhand smoke.

## Smoking-Related Economic Costs to West Virginia

Smoking-related economic costs can be separated into 1) direct health care costs related to cigarette smoking<sup>5</sup> and 2) productivity losses due to smoking-related deaths.<sup>3</sup> Combined, these smoking-related costs totaled between \$1.98 billion and \$2.39 billion among West Virginia adults in 2006.<sup>6</sup>

- In 2006, smoking-related direct health care costs totaled \$1.3 billion. This equals \$3,388 per every adult smoker or \$718 per every West Virginia resident.
- In each year 2002-2006, productivity losses due to smoking-related deaths among adults age 35 and older, averaged \$1.09 billion. This equals \$2,848 per every adult smoker or \$605 per every West Virginia resident.
- Total smoking-related health care costs and productivity losses equal \$6,236 annually per adult smoker or \$1,323 per every West Virginia resident.
- Each West Virginia adult age 35 and older who died from a smoking-related illness represented a loss of nearly \$288,000 in wages and future earnings.

WV Smoking-Related Economic Costs



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