



*May 2026*



This month's RISE News features many new rural-specific resources and support opportunities we hope you find valuable. Among them is a rural-specific ArcGIS story map! A big shout out to CTPP and Tam Vuong for creating this innovative resource that helps tell the rural story. (*See article below.*)

[I&E Days](#) is just around the corner! We are really excited to get to see you in person! ***Please plan to stay a few minutes after the group photo at 12:30 on the capitol steps for our annual rural projects photo.*** We wish you all impactful meetings with your district elected officials and caucus leaders!

With care and excitement,

*Shelly, JoAnn, & Sue*



## *Upcoming Events*



### **Rural Tobacco & Nicotine Treatment Discussion Group (Bimonthly)**

*First Monday of every other month*

**June 1, 2026**

**2:00 PM - 3:00 PM**

[Zoom Link](#)

Meeting ID: 854 6565 2523

Passcode: 265859

Phone in: 669-444-9171

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### Rural Initiatives Workgroup (RIW)

*Third Tuesday of the month*  
Tuesday, May 19, 2026  
3:00 - 4:30 PM

#### Topics / Guests

Report outs from RISE Up Leadership Academy Capstone Projects

Topic or guest ideas? Contact [jsaccato@healthcollaborative.org](mailto:jsaccato@healthcollaborative.org)

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*The Rural Initiatives Workgroup (RIW) is a monthly workgroup hosted by RISE for rural projects to learn, share information, network, celebrate wins, and brainstorm challenges. Invitation only. Contact [Shelly Brantley](mailto:Shelly.Brantley).*

The graphic features the RISE logo (sun and rainbow) on the left, with the word "RISE" in green to its right. The background is a photograph of two modern glass skyscrapers against a blue sky. The text is overlaid on a white geometric pattern.

**Urban & Suburban Office Hour**

Third Thursdays  
2:00P - 3:00P  
[Via Zoom](#)

**For urban projects working in rural communities**

**RISE Office Hours: Urban and Suburban Projects**

Thursday, May 21, 2026  
2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

[Zoom Link](#)

Meeting ID: 893 3587 8656

Passcode: 527327

Phone in: 669-444-9171

**\*\*NOTE: If you have difficulty getting into the Zoom room, use the Meeting ID and Passcode (above) in your own Zoom account/app.\*\***

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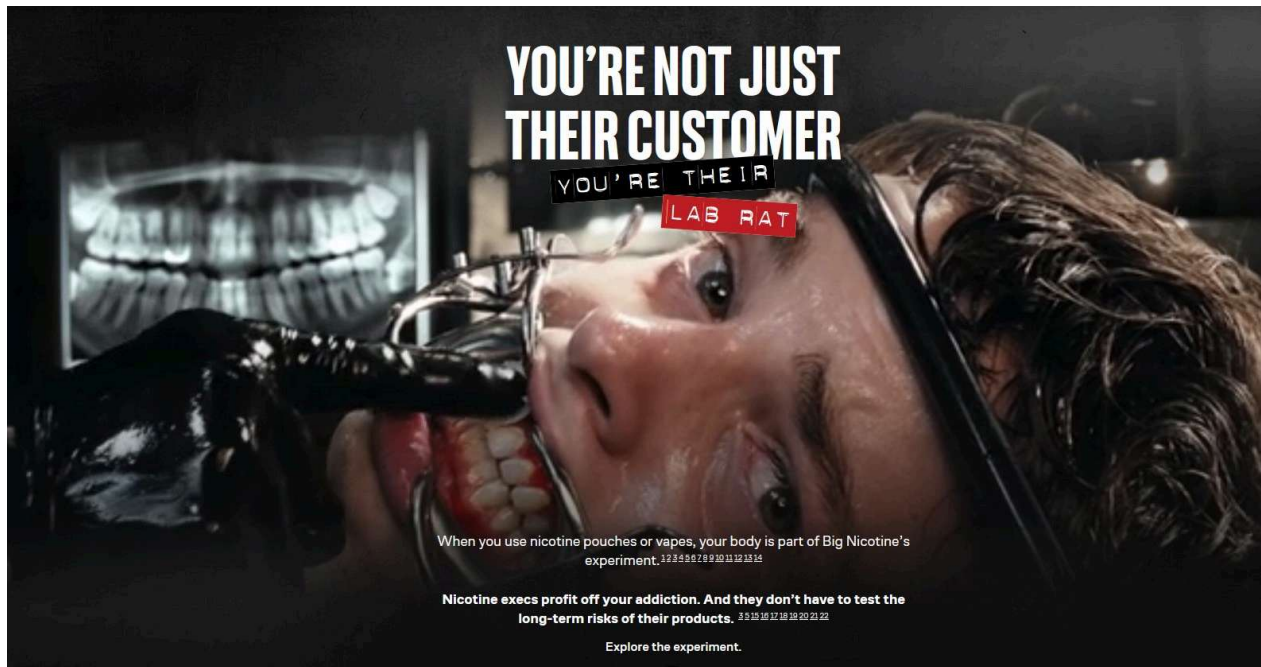
Drop in office hours for urban and suburban projects working in rural jurisdictions.  
Contact [JoAnn Saccato](#) to receive an Outlook calendar invite.



## World No Tobacco Day - May 31st

Created in 1987 by the member states of the World Health Organization (WHO), World No Tobacco Day is commemorated annually to bring global attention to the preventable tobacco epidemic. With a variety of resources for schools, policy advocates and treatment resources, the WHO World No Tobacco Day website can help your project roll out this year's messages and materials.

[Access WHO World No Tobacco Day Resources](#)



## CTPP Targets Young Adults in Bold New Media Campaign

In efforts to reach young adults with important messages about nicotine use dangers and industry targeting, the CTPP Media Unit launched the Not Your Lab Rat campaign April 1, 2026. The horror-movie-mimicking videos are playing across multiple statewide media platforms as well as targeted rural markets from April through June, 2026.

A media campaign field guide is available on Partners and includes key messages, FAQs and fast facts.

[Access the Campaign](#)

## PETS is Looking for New Policy Adoptions!

The Policy Evaluation Tracking System (PETS) team is looking for new and updated policies addressing smokefree air, retail and tobacco product waste, as well as establishment of or updates to TRL fees.



### Local Policy Collection Form

Thank you for helping us track California's local tobacco laws!

We are looking for **policies passed since October 2024** (or currently under consideration) that address:

**Smokefree air** in multi-unit housing, indoors, and outdoors.

**Retail sales** of tobacco or nicotine-containing products.

- Including tobacco retail licensing (TRL) ordinances, restrictions on products, and measures to address the exceptions in state law on flavored products

**Other tobacco policies**, like reducing tobacco product waste (but we don't need specific actions like grandfathering licenses).

**Tobacco retailer license fees** for your jurisdiction(s).

You may use this form to submit **one or more policies at a time**.

If you don't have the full ordinance text or link, **please share any details you can** to help us identify it, such as:

- Ordinance number or title
- Date of passage or meeting(s) where it was discussed

For questions, please contact Alisa Padon at apadon@phi.org.

consideration) in our communities.

Help us co-create this helpful searchable database tool by ensuring your policies are included. (Not sure if your policy has already been submitted? Try their [handy search feature](#) to know for sure!)

For questions, please contact Alisa Padon at apadon@phi.org.

## Submit New Policy Info



## Conversations on Health Care Focuses on Rural Health Needs

Kathleen Sebelius, 21<sup>st</sup> US Secretary of Health and Human Services and 44<sup>th</sup> governor of Kansas, discusses the need for fixing rural healthcare and the big ideas the bipartisan Aspen Institute's Health Strategy Group (AHSG) is recommending to close the health disparities gap in rural America.

[Rural America](#), that is focused on designing care that rural Americans can “reach, afford, and especially trust,” according to William Frist, MD, co-chair of the AHSG and former US Senator from Tennessee and Senate majority leader.

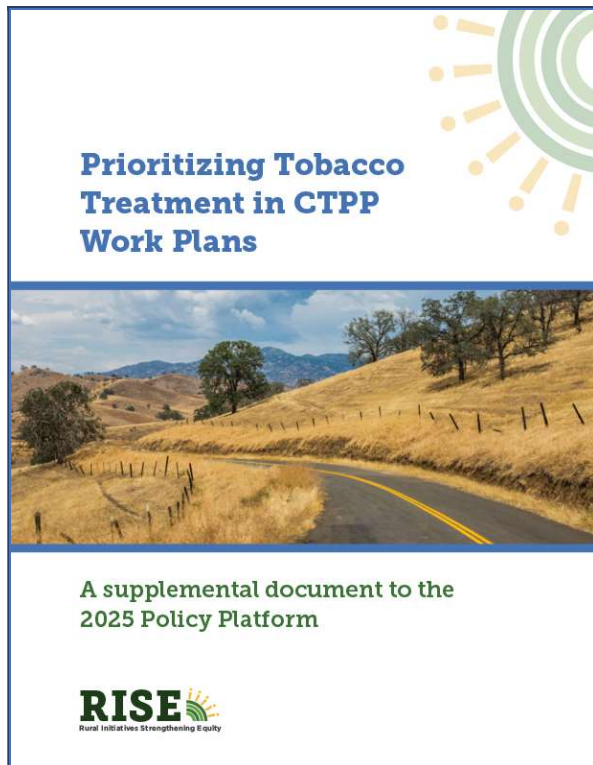
Watch the Conversation

Learn More About the AHSG & Report

***Want your project or community's work featured in a future issue of RISE News?***

Contact [JoAnn](#).

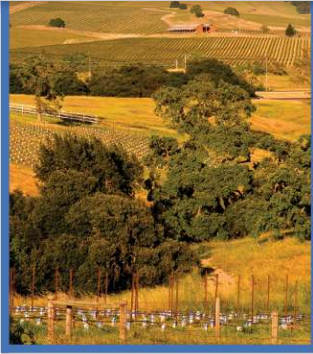
## Rural Resources



### ***Two New Resources Expand on RISE 2025 Policy Platform Top Priority***

In conjunction with RISE's 2025 Policy Platform update, two supplemental documents were created to support rural CTPP-funded prevention staff that focus on the platform's top consideration-- prioritizing tobacco treatment in policy planning and increasing local capacity for treatment provision.

***Prioritizing Tobacco Treatment in CTPP Work Plans*** helps projects identify opportunities to prioritize tobacco treatment in policy planning, integrate strategies into existing work plans, and provides activity language to discuss new



## **Increasing Rural Tobacco Treatment Capacity Through CTPP Work Plans**

A supplemental document to the 2025 Policy Platform



*Increasing Rural Tobacco Treatment Capacity Through CTPP Work Plans*, helps projects identify opportunities to increase local tobacco treatment capacity, such as community asset mapping, building a local referral network, and coordinating with local health providers. The document also helps projects with ideas to integrate strategies into existing work plans and provides activity language to discuss new approaches or potential work plan revisions with Program Consultants.

The documents are available on the [Policy Platform page](#) on the RISE website.

## Access Resources

# **Rural Health, Tobacco Harm**

Tobacco Use and Its Impact on Rural Communities in California

California Tobacco Prevention Program

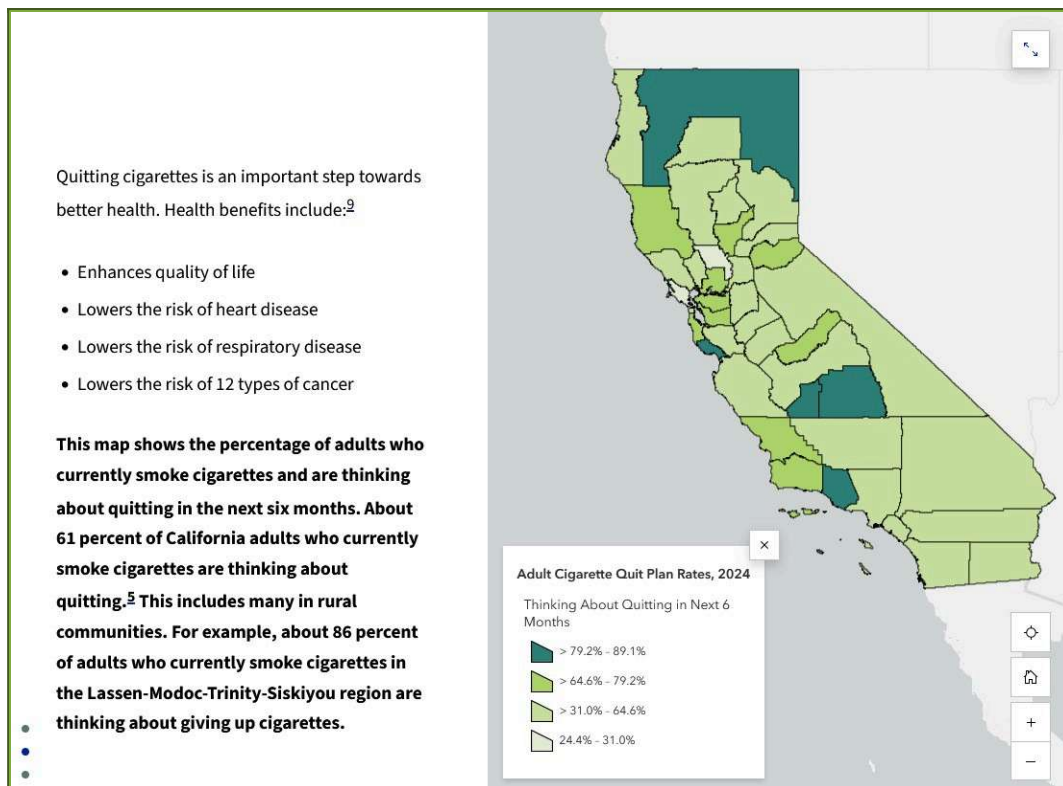
April 24, 2026



## related Topics

The California Tobacco Prevention Program's (CTPP) Evaluation and Surveillance Section recently published an interactive story map focused on rural communities. Through the use of the ArcGIS platform, **Rural Health, Tobacco Harm** offers several interactive maps to show where tobacco use is most common in California, describe the tobacco retail environment, and highlight local policy successes that help protect rural California communities.

### Access Rural Health, Tobacco Harm



Through scrolling maps and data-centered information, the site also shares recent information on desires to quite smoking, secondhand smoke exposure, underage sales violations, and more.

For more information and questions about the new site, contact [Tam Vuong](#).

### Access Rural Health, Tobacco Harm

Open Access Article

### Developing Messages to Prevent Smokeless Tobacco and Nicotine Pouch Uptake Among Early Career Rural Firefighters in California: A Qualitative Study

by Roland Moore <sup>1</sup>, Carol Cunradi <sup>1\*</sup>, Katie Moose <sup>2</sup>, Elizabeth Meza <sup>2</sup>, Evi Hernandez <sup>2</sup> and Raul Castano <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prevention Research Center, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, 2030 Addison Street, Suite 410, Berkeley, CA 94704, USA

<sup>2</sup> California Health Collaborative, 7311 Greenhaven Drive Ste. 270, Sacramento, CA 95831, USA

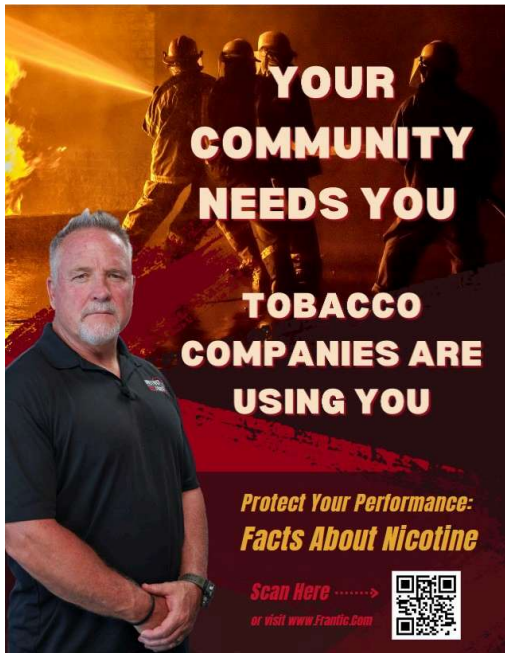
\* Author to whom correspondence should be addressed.

Behav. Sci. 2026, 16(3), 470; <https://doi.org/10.3390/bs16030470>

Submission received: 31 December 2025 / Revised: 15 March 2026 / Accepted: 18 March 2026 / Published: 22 March 2026

(This article belongs to the Special Issue Workplace Communication: An Emerging Field of Study)

## Read the Study



## Study Focused on Tobacco & Nicotine Messaging for Rural Firefighters Results in Free Resources for Prevention Projects

A [study](#) recently published in a special issue of the Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute (MDPI) Journal, Behavioral Sciences explores messaging to help prevent rural firefighting staff from becoming addicted to nicotine.

The study centered around a Tobacco Related Disease Research Program (TRDRP) funded pilot project in Northern California called Firefighter Research About Nicotine and Tobacco in California (FRANTIC). Project team members interviewed firefighter subject matter experts on the use of tobacco and nicotine products, particularly nicotine pouches, by professionals in their field. This information was then used to develop educational materials for use in fire department trainings and onboarding.

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*“Because firefighters often initiate use of these products after they join the fire service, communicating prevention messages in the workplace during the firefighter training and recruitment stage may help disrupt the uptake of nicotine products.” ~ [Developing Messages to Prevent Smokeless Tobacco and Nicotine Pouch Uptake Among Early Career Rural Firefighters in California: A Qualitative Study](#)*

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While the FRANTIC project was completed in December, 2025, the [FRANTIC website](#) is still active and, through the support of the California



Access the Resources

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Visit the FRANTIC  
Website

sheets to fire departments and tobacco prevention projects and coalitions. Those interested in obtaining the resources can contact [Elizabeth Meza](#).

Additionally, in collaboration with the Firefighter Cancer Support Network, the FRANTIC team also developed an [onboarding training video](#) discussing the physical impact of nicotine, industry targeting of firefighters, and alternatives to nicotine that will provide healthy sustainable energy, alertness, and resilience from professional demands.

For more information and access to the developed resources, visit the [FRANTIC website](#).

# NICOTINE POUCH Educational Material Packed with 2024 Retail Surveillance Data

Find it in Partners in the [Tobacco Retail Environment > E-Cigarettes & Emerging Products](#) tab under the Nicotine Pouch Resource Section. (You'll need to be logged into Partners to access.)

Access Resource

Results from 2024 California Tobacco Retail Surveillance Study, the longest-running retail surveillance in the US to monitor tobacco product availability, price, and marketing

**Nicotine pouches** contain nicotine powder, flavors, and other chemicals. Nicotine is **highly addictive**<sup>1</sup> and **affects developing brain health**.<sup>2</sup> Placed between the lip and gum, pouch use **endangers oral health**.<sup>3</sup>

**Pouches are more common than vapes in stores that sell tobacco**

**Zyn is the most common brand available for sale**

Zyn (61%)  
On! (39%)  
Rogue (19%)  
Fre (5%)  
Velo (2%)  
Other brands (24%)

**Zyn appeals to price-sensitive customers**

Zyn is cheaper in neighborhoods with more residents under 21 years that are rural

**Zyn is cheaper at pharmacies**

Pharmacy	\$5.84
Supermarket	\$6.65
Convenience	\$7.20
Discount/Other	\$7.52
Small market	\$7.73
Liquor	\$8.15
Tobacco specialty	\$8.18

**Zyn 3 mg and 6 mg are the same price in 99% of stores, incentivizing customers to purchase pouches with more nicotine**

**A large proportion of stores sell pouches with more\* nicotine than Zyn\* greater than 6 mg**

**Pouches are the only tobacco product in California to experience consistent increase in sales, led by Zyn<sup>1</sup>**

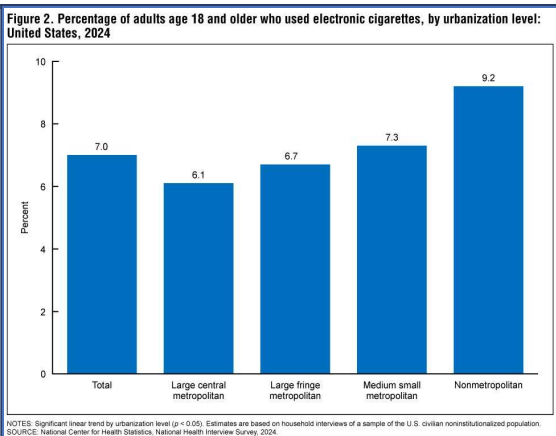
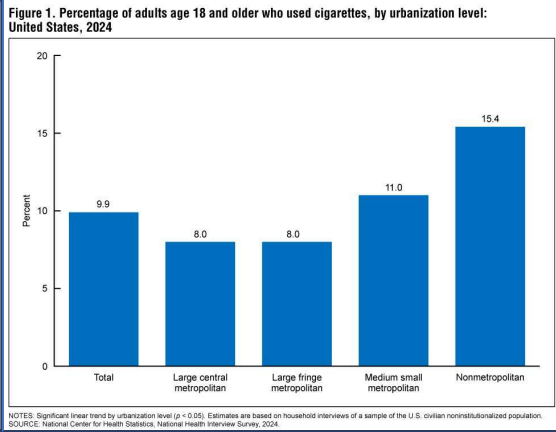
**Pouch ads are nearly as common as cigarette ads\*\*** (\*\*interior and exterior store ads; among stores that sold the product)

Cigarettes	68.7%
Pouches	63.1%
Vapes	57.6%
Cigarillos	39.5%

Funding: California Tobacco Prevention Program (20-10188)  
Source: California Tobacco Retail Surveillance Study 2024

STANFORD PREVENTION RESEARCH CENTER  
the science of healthy living

CDPH  
California Department of Public Health



## Recent Health E-Stat Report Tracks 2024 Rural Tobacco and Vape Use

In March, 2026, the CDC's Center for National Health Statistics released a report on the use of cigarettes and e-cigarettes by urbanization using 2024 National Health Interview Survey data.

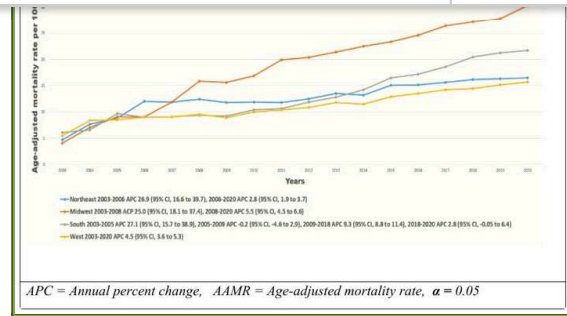
[Cigarette and Electronic Cigarette Use Among Adults by Urbanization Level: United States, 2024](#), shows increased use in both cigarettes and e-cigarettes in adult populations as urbanization decreases.

Access the Report

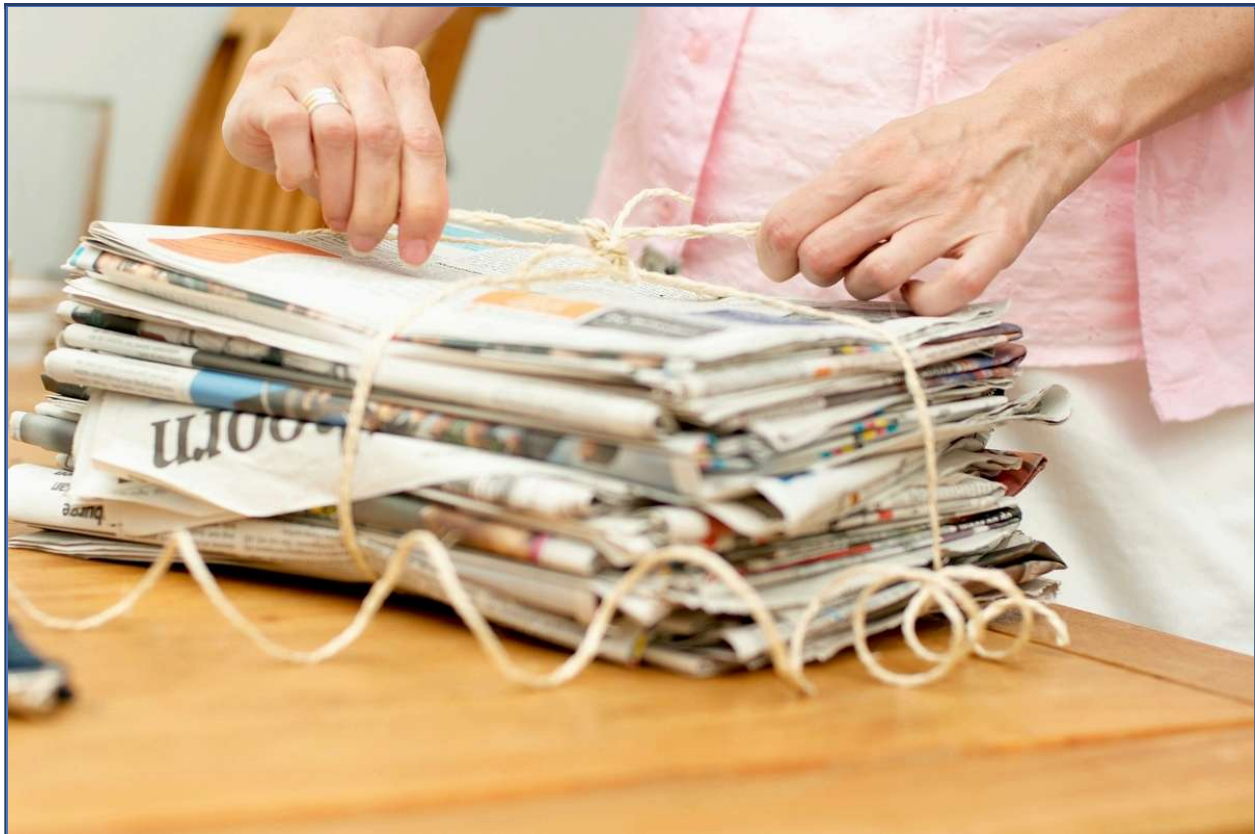
## Tobacco Use Disorder, Mortality Trends and Disparities in the United States

A recently released [study](#) published in the *Annals of Medicine and Surgery* explores the extent of demographic and geographic disparities in heart failure mortality in tobacco users by analyzing mortality trends from 2003-2020 data.

Providing the first long-term, population-level assessment of smoking-related heart failure mortality across U.S. demographic and geographic subgroups, study authors highlight that the greatest disparities recorded were in Midwestern and rural regions.



[Read the Study](#)



### In the News...

- [UK Lawmakers Approve Lifetime Smoking Ban for Today's Under-18s](#): Reuters

Reuters

- [Influencers are Spinning Nicotine as a 'Natural' Health Hack](#): New York Times (Dr. Jeremiah Mock is quoted in this article.)

## Trending Tidbits

### Vapes are Trash!

Access ready-to-use posters, fliers, social media templates, and presentations to spread the word about the environmental and health impacts of vaping from this [Parents Against Vaping](#) campaign.

Learn More & Access Resources



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