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Champaign-Urbana Public Health District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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E-cigarettes: Not Harmless Water Vapor

CUPHD Highlights Health Concerns Associated with Vaping

Champaign, IL – The Champaign-Urbana Public Health District (CUPHD) has released an infographic highlighting the health hazards of e-cigarettes, as well as recommended solutions to protect public health. The infographic is available at www.facebook.com/wechoosehealthchampaign.

The flyer describes the toxic chemicals in e-cigarettes. Studies have found that e-cigarette vapor contains chemicals found in formaldehyde, antifreeze, pesticides, and heavy metals. The chemicals are known causes of serious health issues such as cancer, popcorn lung, bone marrow damage, and fetus neurodevelopmental damage. For these and other reasons, a 2016 US Surgeon General report designated e-cigarettes as a national public health threat.

The health hazards of cigarettes are more alarming because e-cigarettes have been the most commonly used tobacco product among youth for several years. Over two million middle and high school students were e-cigarette users in 2016, compared to 1.43 million cigarette smokers. In Champaign County, approximately nine percent of twelfth graders used e-cigarettes in 2016, compared to four percent who used cigarettes.

Additionally, contrary to popular perception e-cigarettes do not help smokers quit. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved e-cigarettes as a cessation method, and most e-cigarette users also smoke conventional cigarettes. This is referred to as dual use.

Tara McCauley, Special Projects Coordinator, said, “E-cigarette marketing has misled the public about the safety of vaping. I hope that our infographic sheds some light on health effects of e-cigarettes.”

The public health community recommends e-cigarette-free spaces as one important strategy to curb e-cigarette exposure. Matching e-cigarette-free policies to smoke-free policies protects people from secondhand vapors and reduces e-cigarette use. In Champaign County at least 300 businesses and organizations already have e-cigarette-free policies. Additional e-cigarette prevention recommendations include better enforcement of existing age restriction laws and reduced e-cigarette marketing.

CUPHD’s tobacco prevention project is part of the Illinois Department of Public Health’s Tobacco Free Communities initiative.

For more information: www.c-uphd.org/tobacco.html

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