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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Tobacco Companies to Run Court-Ordered Ads Telling the Truth about their Deadly Products; Ads Show Why Wisconsin Needs Strong Action to Fight Tobacco Use**

**GREENFIELD, WI** – Starting Nov. 26, the major U.S. tobacco companies have to run ads in over 50 newspapers and on TV to nationally tell the American people the truth about the deadly consequences of smoking and secondhand smoke.

“These ads serve as a reminder that tobacco’s terrible toll is no accident,” said Darren Rausch, Health Officer/Director of Greenfield Health Department. “It is a step forward that Big Tobacco has been forced to issue these long-overdue corrective statements, but it’s far from enough.”

A federal court in 2006 ordered the companies to make these “[corrective statements](#)” after finding them guilty of breaking civil racketeering laws and lying to the public about the dangers of smoking and how they marketed to children. The ads will finally run after 11 years of appeals by the tobacco companies aimed at weakening and delaying the statements. They even fought (successfully) to remove the phrase “here is the truth” from the corrective statements, which would have highlighted the fact that the industry deliberately deceived the public.

The corrective statement ads will focus attention on the enormous public health problem caused by tobacco use and the need for strong action to save lives. To reduce tobacco use, prevention efforts are key. Parents can help by starting the conversation with their kids about the damage nicotine and tobacco can do.

In **WISCONSIN** alone, 8.1 percent of high school students still smoke cigarettes, and 13 percent of high school students consider themselves current e-cigarette users. Tobacco use claims **7,356 Wisconsin lives** and costs the state \$4.5 **Billion** in health care and lost productivity expenses annually.

Background:

In 1999, the U.S. Department of Justice sued the major cigarette manufacturers, charging they had violated the civil provisions of the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act



(RICO) and other laws. Tobacco company defendants in the case include Altria, its Philip Morris USA subsidiary and R.J. Reynolds.

On Aug. 17, 2006, U.S. District Judge Gladys Kessler issued her verdict against the companies. In a 1,683-page [final opinion](#), she detailed how the tobacco companies “have marketed and sold their lethal products with zeal, with deception, with a singled-minded focus on their financial success, and without regard for the human tragedy or social costs that success exacted.” Importantly, Judge Kessler concluded, “The evidence in this case clearly establishes that Defendants have not ceased engaging in unlawful activity.”

Judge Kessler ordered the tobacco companies to publish corrective statements on five topics about which they had deliberately deceived the public:

- the adverse health effects of smoking;
- addictiveness of smoking and nicotine;
- lack of significant health benefit from smoking “low tar,” “light,” “ultra-light,” “mild” and “natural” cigarettes (products that have been deceptively marketed as less harmful than regular cigarettes);
- manipulation of cigarette design and composition to ensure optimum nicotine delivery; and
- adverse health effects of exposure to secondhand smoke.

The corrective statement ads will start running Nov. 26 in print and online in about 50 newspapers specified by the court. They will also run during prime time on the major television networks for one year. The tobacco companies must also publish the corrective statements on their websites and cigarette packs; implementation details are still being finalized.

The corrective statement newspaper ads must run in the front section of Sunday newspapers on Nov. 26, Dec. 10, Jan. 7, Feb. 4 and March 4. Corrective statements will appear in over 50 newspapers, per the judge’s order. The tobacco companies will pay the entire cost of running the ads. (Click [here](#) for details about the implementation of the court-ordered corrective statements.)

Despite significant progress in reducing smoking, tobacco use is still the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the United States, killing more than 480,000 Americans and costing the nation about \$170 billion in health care expenses each year.

View the [full text of the corrective statements](#) and [details on when and where they will run](#).

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