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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Great American Spit Out Gives Arkansans One More Reason to Quit

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Feb. 21, 2012) – Stamp Out Smoking encourages Arkansas smokeless tobacco users to participate in the Great American Spit Out on February 23. The Great American Spit Out is a national cessation day selected to decrease spit tobacco use, increase awareness of the negative health effects of using these products and help smokeless tobacco users quit for at least one day, with the hope that they will quit for good. The event is part of a national weeklong public awareness campaign called Through With Chew Week, which occurs from February 19-25.

“Arkansas has so many great resources to help tobacco users quit,” said Dr. Carolyn Dresler, medical director for the Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Program. “The Great American Spit Out, coupled with the dangerous health effects and growing costs of smokeless tobacco, is one more reason for Arkansans to take advantage of resources like the Arkansas Tobacco Quitline.”

The Arkansas Tobacco Quitline, which can be reached by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW, provides free motivational counseling with a trained Quit Coach® and free nicotine-replacement therapy medications while supplies last. The Quitline is available 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Services are available in English, Spanish, Marshallese and additional languages if needed. Counseling is tailored to the specific needs of the tobacco user.

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Smokeless tobacco contains nicotine and 28 cancer-causing agents. It is a known cause of human cancer and increases the risk of developing cancer of the oral cavity, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Smokeless tobacco is associated with recession of the gums, gum disease and tooth decay. In addition, it is strongly associated with leukoplakia, a precancerous lesion of the mouth. For better health and a better smile, quit.

To take steps towards freedom from smokeless tobacco, contact the Arkansas Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-Quit-Now, or visit www.healthy.arkansas.gov or www.stampoutsmoking.com.

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