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NORTH CENTRAL PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT

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Public Service Announcement

Date: May 15, 2023
To: All Media
From: Shellie Campbell, Director
North Central Public Health District
Subject: **Lewis & Clark Festival Park Goes Tobacco/Vape-Free**

At the request of North Central Public Health District (NCPHD) and others, The Dalles City Council unanimously voted May 8 to prohibit smoking and vaping at Lewis & Clark Festival Park.

This new ordinance brings Festival Park in line with the other nine parks within city limits, which are all run by Northern Wasco County Parks & Recreation District and have tobacco-free policies. The city's ordinance, however, differs from the park policy in that it carries a \$100 fine for those found in violation.

However, it is expected that most people will self-comply with the new rule, and police officers are directed to educate the public about the prohibition, rather than issue a ticket, as the initial enforcement method.

“This has been a longtime goal of the health district and we want to thank the city council for taking this positive step to protect the community's health,” said Neita Cecil, Tobacco Prevention and Education Program Coordinator for NCPHD.

“This accomplishes so much,” Cecil said. “It will protect the public from secondhand smoke, reduce litter and fire danger from cigarette butts, and help people who've quit, or are trying to quit, avoid being triggered by being around smoking. And perhaps most importantly, it reduces youth exposure to tobacco use.”

NCPHD is also now offering free tobacco cessation counseling to residents of any age, and free nicotine patches, gum or lozenges to residents 18 and older. To sign up for the free counseling and nicotine replacement therapy, please call 541-506-2609, email neitac@ncphd.org, or visit <https://www.ncphd.org/tobacco-programs> to sign yourself up.

NCPHD was joined in its request for the ordinance by the parks and recreation district, Northern Wasco County School District 21, YouthThink, The Dalles Area Chamber of Commerce, Marilyn Wong, representing the American Cancer Society, and Dan and Michele Spatz.

For more information, please contact North Central Public Health District at (541) 506-2600, visit us on the web at www.ncphd.org or find us on Facebook.

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