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PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Residents Can Breathe A Little Easier Tobacco Use Ban at County Parks Takes Effect This Week

A new law which restricts tobacco use in outdoor recreational areas owned and operated by the County Parks Department is being implemented this week. This ordinance was enacted by the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors in May. The policy bans tobacco use at 70 parks, beaches, and trails located in the unincorporated areas of the county. The law excludes parks that allow overnight camping, namely Lake Cachuma and Jalama Beach. The goal of the policy is to create a healthier, smoke-free and tobacco litter-free atmosphere in these outdoor recreational areas. Signs and a media campaign will be utilized to communicate the new law to the public.

County Parks and Public Health Department officials are excited about ushering in the summer with this new ordinance in place. The Santa Barbara County Youth Corps is responsible for sign installation, which marks the first phase of the ordinance's implementation. The program employs and trains out-of-school youth to work on this type of project. Signs are being installed in stages with all locations due to be signed by the end of June.

Public education will include print ads and radio spots in English and Spanish. County websites and public access TV will also be used to educate the public. "This policy will improve the public's health and the environment. Our department will continue education and outreach efforts about this policy", says Dr. Takashi Wada, Health Officer and Director of the County Public Health Department.

Supervisor Janet Wolf says, "I am proud to have sponsored this legislation and feel that a tobacco-free environment will enhance our County's spectacular outdoor areas".

For more information about the law and/or to get involved in outreach and education at your neighborhood parks, please contact, Dawn M. Dunn at dawn.dunn@sbcphd.org.

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