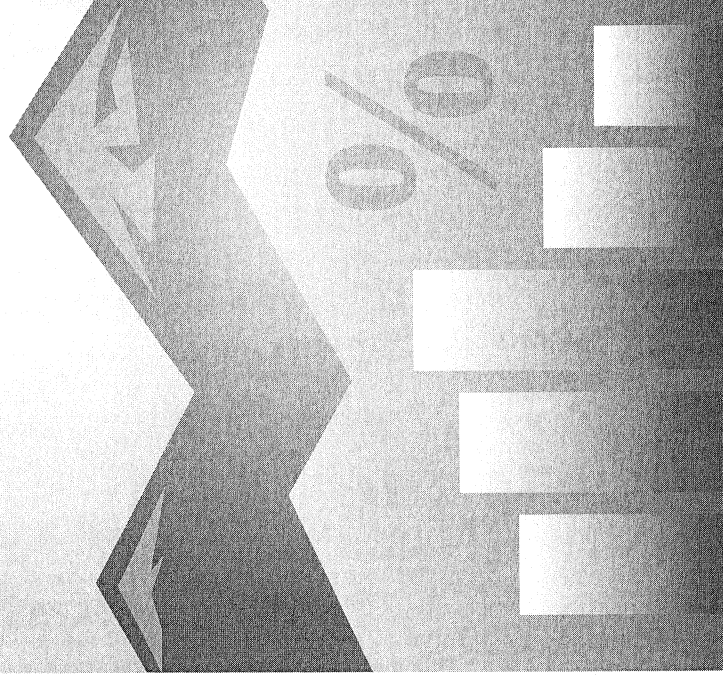
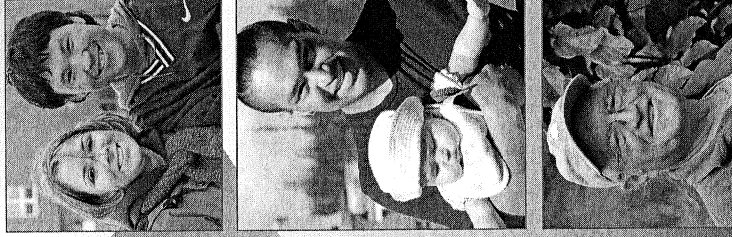


September, 2009, Update

Alaska Tobacco Facts

The impact of tobacco on the lives
of Alaska's people.



Alaska Tobacco Facts

2009 Update

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Alaska Tobacco Facts, 2009 Update

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1. Introduction

In 2004, the Alaska Division of Public Health produced *Tobacco in the Great Land* (www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/pubs/tobaccofeb04.pdf), a monograph intended to provide the reader with a comprehensive review of data related to tobacco use and its consequences in Alaska. *Alaska Tobacco Facts* is designed to be a brief, annual update to *Tobacco in the Great Land* that can be used to educate Alaskans about the toll that tobacco continues to take on the health and well-being of our citizens.

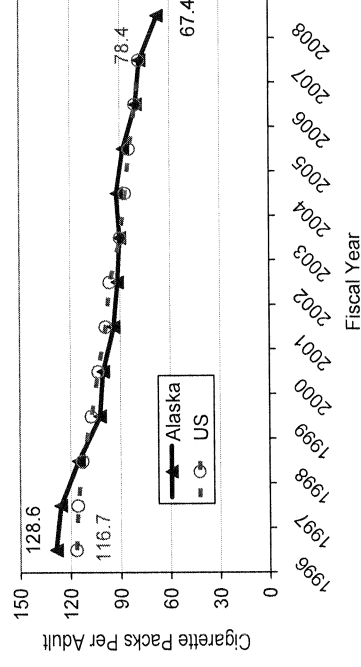
Trends in tobacco use are measured from the baseline year of 1996, prior to two early events in tobacco prevention and control in Alaska: the tobacco tax increase in 1997 and Alaska's decision to join in the national multi-state Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement in 1998. Differences are noted where there is statistical significance ($p < .05$).

The following are highlights from *Alaska Tobacco Facts, 2009 Update*:

- Per adult cigarette consumption declined 48% from State Fiscal Year (SFY) 1996 to SFY 2008: **405 million fewer cigarettes** were sold in 2008 compared to 1996.
- In 2007, tobacco use cost Alaskans \$314 million in direct medical expenditures and an additional \$177 million in lost productivity due to tobacco-related deaths.
- **The percentage of adult smokers in Alaska has declined** by one-fifth since 1996 to 21.5 percent in 2007, a statistically significant decrease.
- Alaska Native adults are twice as likely to smoke as non-Native adults.
- Alaskans with less education, with lower incomes, and who live in rural areas of the state also smoke more than their peers.
- The majority of Alaskan adults who currently smoke want to quit; three out of five tried to quit in the last 12 months.
- Smoking among high school students has dropped from 36.5% in 1995 to 17.8% in 2007.
- Although they are still more than twice as likely to smoke as students of other racial backgrounds, Alaska Native high school students were also the only group to show a decrease in smoking between 2003 (44.2%) and 2007 (31.7%).
- Eight out of ten smokers believe that secondhand smoke is harmful and nearly as many agree that people should be protected from secondhand smoke.

2. Cigarette Consumption

Annual Per Adult Sales of Cigarette Packs, By Fiscal Year, Alaska and US (minus Alaska), 1996-2008

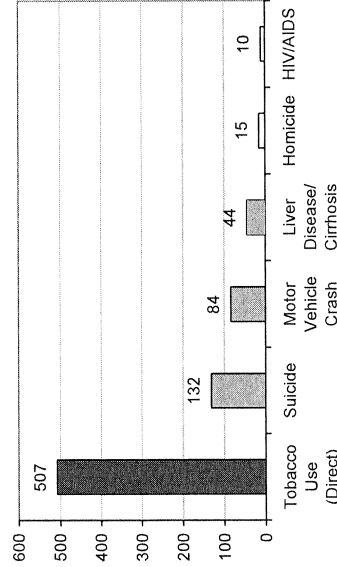


Sources: Alaska Department of Revenue, Tax Division FY08 Reports; Orzechowski & Walker, *The Tax Burden on Tobacco*, 2007.

- Between State Fiscal Years (SFY) 1996 and 2008, the per adult number of cigarette packs sold in Alaska dropped 48%, from 128.6 packs to 67.4 packs per adult.
- This drop in cigarette sales translates to 405 million fewer cigarettes sold in Alaska in 2008 compared to 1996.

3. Tobacco-Related Deaths and Economic Costs

Number of Deaths Due to Selected Causes,
Alaska, 2006



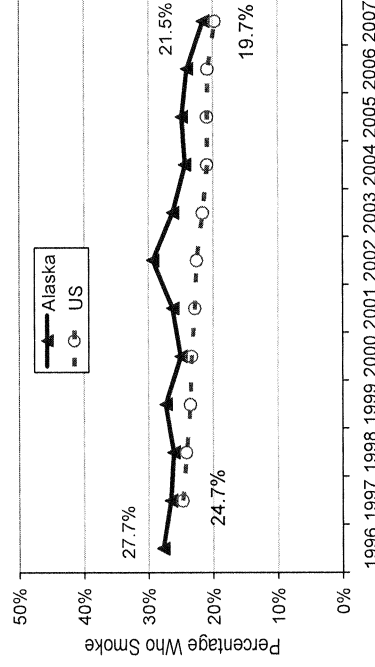
Sources: Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics (2006 deaths); Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (smoking prevalence); CDC, Smoking Attributable Morbidity, Mortality, and Economic Costs.*

- More Alaskans die annually from the effects of tobacco use than from suicide, motor vehicle crashes, chronic liver disease and cirrhosis, homicide, and HIV/AIDS combined.
- An additional estimated 120 Alaskans die each year from lung cancer and heart disease caused by exposure to secondhand smoke.
- In 2007, tobacco use cost Alaskans an estimated \$314 million annually in direct medical expenditures and an additional \$177 million annually in lost productivity due to tobacco-related deaths.
- This sums to an astounding \$491 million; yet it underestimates total costs: lost productivity from tobacco-related illness and costs due to second-hand smoke exposure-related illness or death are not included.

* See Section 13: Data Sources, pp 48-49 for information on how smoking-attributable and secondhand smoke-attributable deaths were estimated.

4. Adult Smoking

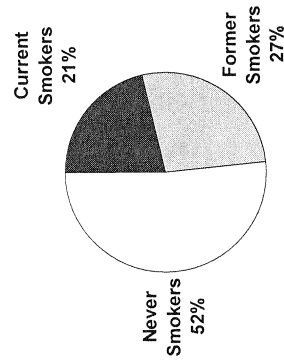
Percentage of Adults Who Smoke, by Year
Alaska and US, 1996-2007



Sources: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Standard BRFSS Survey (1996-2003), combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys (2004-2007); National Health Interview Survey

- Smoking prevalence has declined significantly from 27.7% in 1996 to 21.5% in 2007.
- Among women, the proportion of smokers decreased significantly from 24.2% in 1996 to 18.9% in 2007.
- Among men, the decline in smoking was not significant.
- Men continue to be significantly more likely than women to be smokers: in 2007, 24.0% of Alaskan men vs. 18.9% of Alaskan women were current smokers.

Smoking Status of Adults, Alaska, 2007

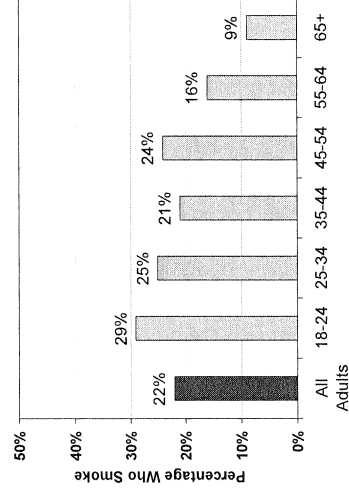


Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys

- As the proportion of smokers decreases, the proportion of Alaskans who have never been smokers has increased from 46.3% in 1996 to 51.7% in 2007.
- Although proportion of former smokers among all Alaskan adults has remained at about a quarter of the population, among Alaskans who have ever been smokers, the proportion of former smokers increased from 48.4% in 1996 to 55.5% in 2007.
- Being able to stay quit for 3 or more months greatly increases the chances of quitting tobacco for life. Among recent smokers—those who smoked in the past year, the proportion that have successfully remained quit for 3 or more months has increased from 5.5% in 2001 to 9.1% in 2007.

Note: Questions in the Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System about when former smokers last smoked changed in 2001, and data from earlier years are not comparable.

Percentage of Adults Who Smoke, by Age Group, Alaska, 2007



Note: Throughout this report percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number in graphs and tables in which at least one category's prevalence estimate is based on fewer than 500 responses (per national BRFSS guidelines).

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys

- Among Alaskans between the ages of 40 to 59, smoking decreased significantly from 28.7% in 1996 to 21.6% in 2007.
- Younger adults between the ages of 18 and 34 are the most likely to be smokers (27%).
- More than half of all current smokers (57%) were smoking by the time they were 17 years old.

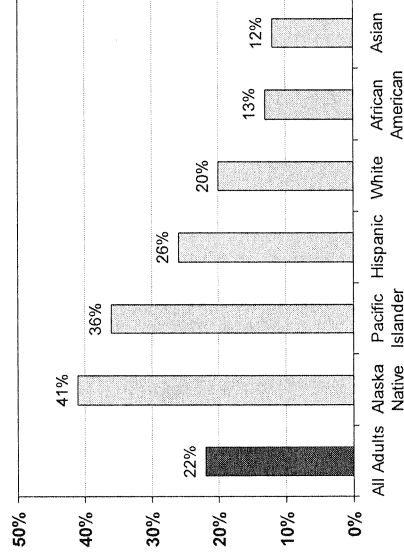
Percentage of Adults Who Smoke, by Region, Alaska, 2007

Region	Percentage
North/Interior	36%
Southwest	34%
Mat-Su Borough	26%
Fairbanks (North Star)	22%
Gulf Coast	20%
Anchorage Borough	20%
Southeast	19%
All Adults	22%

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys

- Residents of more rural regions in Alaska – Southwest and North/Interior Regions – are more likely than residents of other regions of Alaska to smoke.
- Between 1996 and 2007, adult smoking prevalence decreased in three regions of Alaska: Anchorage (23% to 17%), Gulf Coast (29% to 20%), and Southeast (28% to 19%).
- Regional groupings include:
 - Anchorage Borough
 - Mat-Su Borough
 - Gulf Coast – Kenai, Kodiak, and Valdez Cordova Boroughs and Census Areas (plus part of Denali)
 - Southeast – Yakutat, Skagway, Juneau, Sitka, Haines, Wrangell-Petersburg, Ketchikan, and Ketchikan Gateway Boroughs and Census Areas
 - Fairbanks (North Star) – Fairbanks North Star Borough
 - North/Interior – Nome, Northwest Arctic, North Slope, Yukon-Koyukuk, Southeast Fairbanks, and Denali Boroughs and Census Areas
 - Southwest – Bristol Bay, East Aleutians, West Aleutians, Dillingham, Lake & Peninsula, Bethel, and Wade Hampton Boroughs and Census Areas (plus part of Yukon-Koyukuk)

Percentage of Adults Who Smoke, by Race/Ethnicity, Alaska, 2005-2007

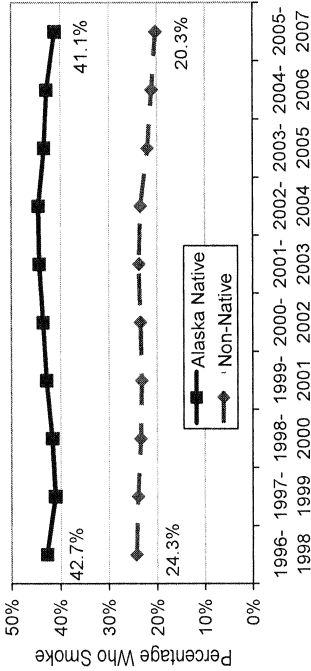


Note: The race categories of Alaska Native, African American, Asian, Pacific Islander, and White do not include respondents of Hispanic ethnicity.

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys

- In Alaska, African American adults and Asian adults are significantly less likely to smoke than adults from all other race/ethnicity groups.
- Alaska Native adults are more likely to be smokers than Hispanic, White, African American, or Asian adults.
- Alaskans of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander heritage are more likely to be smokers than are White, African American, or Asian adults.
- There is no significant difference in smoking prevalence between White and Hispanic adults.

Percentage of Adults Who Smoke, by Year
Alaska Natives and Non-Natives, 1996-2007
(3-year moving averages)



Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys

- Smoking prevalence has remained relatively stable among Alaska Natives over the past decade; among non-Native adults, there has been a small but significant decrease in smoking from 1996 to 2007.
- Alaska Native adults are currently twice as likely to smoke as non-Native Alaskan adults.

Percentage of Adults Who Smoke, by Socio-Economic Status and Race, Alaska, 2005-2007

SES Status*	Alaska Natives	Alaska Non-Natives	Total
Lower	48%	34%	38%
Higher	33%	16%	18%
All Adults	41%	20%	22%

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys

*Lower SES is calculated as those persons with less than a High School education or less than 185% of the Alaska Poverty Level Guideline.

- Nearly half (42%) of adult smokers live in households earning less than 185% of the Alaska Poverty Level Guideline.
- Although unemployed adults and those who are unable to work comprise about 11% of the overall adult population, they are disproportionately likely to smoke; 43% of unemployed adults and 46% of those who are unable to work are smokers, compared to 20% of employed adults who smoke.

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys, 2007

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys, 2007

**Percentage of Adults Who Smoke, by Education and Race,
Alaska, 2005-2007**

Education Level	Alaska Natives	Alaska Non- Natives	Total
Less than high school graduate	45%	45%	45%
High school graduate or GED	45%	29%	33%
Some college	36%	21%	23%
College graduate	27%	9%	10%
All Adults	41%	20%	23%

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys

**Percentage of Adults Who Smoke, by Income and Race,
Alaska, 2005-2007**

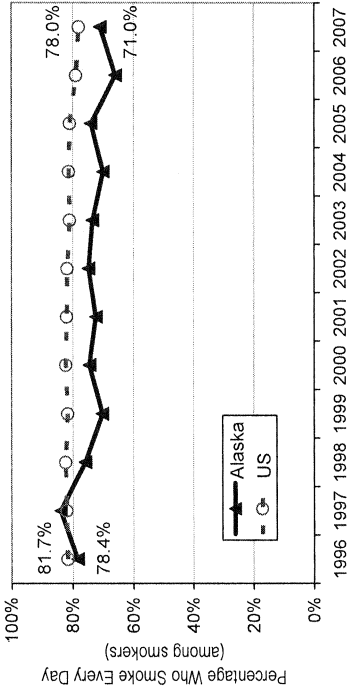
Household Income Level	Alaska Natives	Alaska Non- Natives	Total
Less than \$15,000	49%	39%	43%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	49%	31%	35%
\$25,000 - \$49,000	45%	25%	28%
\$50,000 - \$74,000	37%	17%	18%
\$75,000 or more	21%	13%	14%
All Adults	42%	20%	23%

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys

- Alaskans with fewer years of education and/or lower household income are more likely to be smokers; this pattern is true for both Alaska Native and non-Native adults.

Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys, 2005-2007

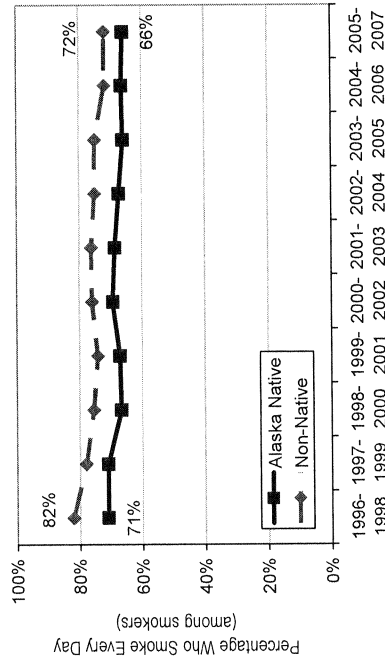
**Percentage of Adult Smokers Who Smoke Every Day, by Year
Alaska and United States, 1996-2007**



Sources: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Standard Survey (1996-2003), combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys (2004-2007); National Health Interview Survey

- The proportion of Alaskan smokers who smoke every day has remained about the same since 1996; roughly 7 out of 10 smoke daily.

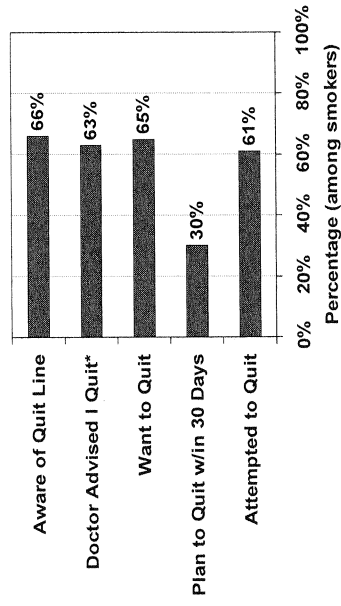
Percentage of Adult Smokers Who Smoke Every Day, by Year
Alaska Natives and Non-Natives, 1996-2007
 (3-Year moving averages)



Source: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Standard Survey (1996-2003), combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys (2004-2007)

- Compared to non-Native adult smokers in Alaska, Alaska Native adult smokers have consistently been less likely to smoke every day.
- The proportion of non-Native adult smokers who smoke daily has significantly decreased since 2007.

Percentage of Adult Smokers Endorsing Key Cessation Variables
Alaska, 2007



Sources: Alaska Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Modified Survey (except for 'Attempted to Quit' which was based on data from combined Modified and Standard BRFSS Surveys)

*Among current smokers who had a health care visit in the past 12 months.

- Two thirds of Alaskans who currently smoke (65%) want to quit.
- Three out of five current smokers (61%) have attempted to quit in the past 12 months; quit attempts were made by over half of those who smoke every day (55%) and three quarters of those who smoke some days (74%).
- Quit attempts among Alaska Native people who currently smoke have increased from 59% in 2001 to 70% in 2007.
- The proportion of Alaskan smokers who had a health care visit in the past 12 months and received advice from their health care provider to quit has decreased from 73% in 2001 to 63% in 2007.