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For Immediate Release
November 15, 2011

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PUBLIC URGED TO PLEDGE FOR CLEAN OROVILLE PARKS

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. — The Butte County Public Health Department's Tobacco Education Program's *Clean Fun in Oroville: Action for Tobacco Litter-Free Parks* campaign goes to cyberspace. Tobacco litter found on the ground harms the environment and can make small children and animals sick if accidentally swallowed. Children can experience nausea and vomiting from swallowing cigarette butts because of the nicotine, tar, and other toxins concentrated in the cigarette filters. The presence of cigarette litter also sends the wrong message that smoking is a common and accepted practice in the community.

The campaign, which is aimed at increasing public awareness about cigarette litter as a community problem and reducing tobacco litter from parks in the City of Oroville, is supported by over 100 local residents and visitors so far.

Park visitors are being asked to make a pledge to actively reduce the amount of litter, including cigarette litter, at Oroville parks. Now the pledge has gone to cyberspace. Anyone can make the pledge at <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/clean-fun-in-oroville-action-for-tobacco-litter-free-parks/> to get involved in making Oroville parks cleaner and preserving our outdoor recreation areas.

In the coming weeks, radio and print advertising and community presentations will present the message that tobacco litter is a public nuisance and will encourage proper disposal of cigarette butts. "I was impressed that people from far-away places already made the online pledge because they care about Oroville parks. I hope more local residents make the pledge too. Even people who smoke can make the pledge to reduce cigarette litter until they are ready to pledge to be non-smokers," said Raúl Raygoza, Program Coordinator for the Tobacco Education Program.

If you are a smoker who is trying to quit, the 36th Great American Smokeout on November 17th is an opportunity to start a plan to quit by giving up cigarettes for the day or use the day as quit date by planning ahead. The California Smokers' Helpline at 1-800-NO-BUTTS, a free phone counseling service dedicated to helping people quit smoking, is standing by to help callers to develop an action plan to quit smoking. For a limited time, the Helpline can

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provide a free two-week supply of nicotine replacement therapy for those who are eligible.

Everyone can benefit from pledging to reduce litter, including cigarette litter, or pledging to quit smoking for good with the Helpline.

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For further information contact Raúl Raygoza, Public Health Education Specialist and Tobacco Education Program Coordinator
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Butte County Public Health Department

Our Mission: To protect the public through promoting individual, community and environmental health.