

## NEWS RELEASE

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For immediate release

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### **Box Butte County serves as community leader with tobacco-free efforts**

Box Butte County will be a tobacco-free campus to include all forms of tobacco, e-cigarettes, and vaping effective on May 1, 2018. This includes all Box Butte County facilities, county grounds, and county vehicles.

“We feel it is an important step for the County to model good health to the community,” said Michelle Robinson, Box Butte County Assessor. “We are working diligently to provide tobacco-free support and resources to staff and visitors as we go tobacco-free,” she added.

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*Michelle Robinson, Box Butte County Assessor*

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The county will be providing email communications and informational packets to employees with free resources like the Nebraska Tobacco-Free Quitline, 800-QUIT-NOW, the online quitting program, and texting services.

“We know this will not only positively impact our employees but anyone who visits any of our facilities, too,” said Robinson. “We acknowledge this can be a stressful time for employees and want to help in any way by providing employees and visitors with healthier alternatives to tobacco use.”

Tobacco use remains the single most preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the US. Last year, 2,500 Nebraskans died from smoking-attributable causes. That’s 48 people a week-nearly seven people each and every day.

“Tobacco-free employees are healthier, miss less work, and have lower health care costs,” said Assistant Health Director Jessica Davies. “We commend Box Butte County for creating ideal conditions and support for employees and the community to be tobacco-free,” she added.

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*Jessica Davies, Assistant Health Director*

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The Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council is available to assist businesses with the transition to a tobacco-free campus and much more, for additional information about worksite wellness contact Davies at 308-487-3600 ext. 101 or visit [pphd.org/pwwc.html](http://pphd.org/pwwc.html). For questions regarding Box Butte County, contact Robinson at (308)762-6100.

The Panhandle Worksite Wellness Council is proudly part of Panhandle Public Health District. The Council specializes in supporting employers in the Panhandle region. We recognize that many employers support a diverse and remote workforce and offer innovative ways to overcome the

challenge of working with a virtual team. We understand that many of our employers do not have full-time wellness resources and work to provide resources and training to make running a worksite wellness program as easy as possible.

Funding for Tobacco Free in the Panhandle is provided by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services/Tobacco Free Nebraska Program as a result of the Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement.

Panhandle Public Health District is working together to improve the health, safety and quality of life for all who live, learn, work and play in the Panhandle. Our vision is that we are a healthier and safer Panhandle Community.