



New York State Smokers' Quitline

1-866-NY-QUITS (697-8487) / nysmokefree.com

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- *The New York State Smokers' Quitline advocates quitting smoking as one of the best ways to make a difference on Earth Day*
- *Cigarette butts are the most littered item in the country – they take a minimum of nine months to break down, can dilute soil and water, and are a leading cause of fires*
- *Whatever reason works for quitting smoking, go with it – a healthcare provider and a Quit Coach with the New York State Smokers' Quitline will help a tobacco user become smoke-free*

THE BEST WAY TO HELP ON EARTH DAY: QUIT SMOKING

BUFFALO, N.Y. – On Sunday, April 22, countless numbers of New York State residents will participate in Earth Day activities to better the environment. While there are many ways to beautify and protect the earth, the New York State Smokers' Quitline suggests the following as one of the most effective ways to "go green": QUIT SMOKING.

Although smoking rates are at historic lows in New York State, Earth Day volunteers unfortunately will find one particular item to be ubiquitous during their cleanup efforts – cigarette butts. According to the Truth Initiative (<https://truthinitiative.org>), cigarette butts are the most littered item in the country.

The Truth Initiative also reports that cigarette butts are the most prominently littered item on U.S. highways and have consistently comprised 30 to 40 percent of all items collected in annual international coastal and urban cleanups since the 1980s. And although 86 percent of smokers consider cigarette butts to be litter, three-quarters of smokers report disposing of them on the ground or out of a car window.

As small as cigarette butts are, even one can do immense harm. A cigarette butt will take a minimum of nine months to break down, and its particles can dilute soil and water during that time. Animals, fish, and even children may accidentally ingest littered cigarette butts – which contain deadly chemicals. Finally, discarded cigarette butts are a leading cause of forest and house fires.

To view a helpful Truth Initiative poster and related facts about cigarettes' impact on the environment, please visit <https://bit.ly/ED2018Cigarettes>.

Protecting the environment can be one of many reasons to stop smoking. The New York State Smokers' Quitline believes that no reason for quitting is trivial; whatever works, go with it. Then, when it's time to take action, tobacco users should talk with their healthcare provider and also call **1-866-NY-QUITS** (1-866-697-8487) for coaching and resources.

The New York State Smokers' Quitline is a free resource for all state residents, and Quit Coaches are available seven days a week beginning at 9 a.m. to help tobacco users in their quest toward achieving and maintaining a smoke-free life. Additional resources are available online at www.nysmokefree.com.

About the New York State Smokers' Quitline

The New York State Smokers' Quitline is a service of the New York State Department of Health and based at Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center. It is one of the first and busiest state quitlines in the nation, and has responded to more than 2.5 million calls since its inception in 1999. Call 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487) or visit www.nysmokefree.com for more information.

About Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center

Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center is a community united by the drive to eliminate cancer's grip on humanity by unlocking its secrets through personalized approaches and unleashing the healing power of hope. Founded by Dr. Roswell Park in 1898, it is the only National Cancer Institute-designated comprehensive cancer center in Upstate New York. Learn more at www.roswellpark.org, or contact us at 1-800-ROSWELL (1-800-767-9355) or ASKRoswell@roswellpark.org.