

Public Invited to “Clear the Air”

It’s a fact: secondhand smoke causes premature death and disease in children and adults who don’t smoke. Every year 550 non-smoking Mississippians die from exposure to secondhand smoke.

“Even brief exposure to secondhand smoke causes premature death and disease in children and adults who do not smoke,” said Roy Hart, director of the Office of Tobacco Control at the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH). “There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.”

MSDH invites the public to learn more about the dangers of exposure to secondhand smoke during a luncheon to be held in Meridian. The lunch meeting, entitled *Clearing the Air: Eliminating Exposure to Secondhand Smoke in All Public Places Including Workplaces*, is designed to educate and give people the opportunity to voice their concerns about exposure to secondhand smoke and the benefits of smokefree air.

“Everyone deserves to breathe smokefree air,” said Tawni Basden, director of the Tobacco-Free Coalition of Rankin, Scott and Simpson Counties. “This event is an opportunity for citizens to find out how they can help make our state healthier for everyone by supporting the elimination of exposure to secondhand smoke.”

The *Clearing the Air* event will take place on Wednesday, November 3, 2010 at the Riley Center at the MSU Center in Meridian –

Speakers include healthcare providers, elected officials, business owners and people who have been dramatically affected by exposure to secondhand smoke. Lunch is provided and will be served at 11:30 a.m.

For more information on the *Clearing the Air* event, contact the Tobacco-Free Coalition of Rankin, Scott and Simpson Counties at 601-933-9174 or tbasden@dreaminc.org or visit www.SmokefreeAirMS.com.