



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Great American Smokeout® Encourages Millions of Smokers to Set Quit Date

*American Cancer Society®, Free & Clear® Have Helped More Than 1 Million Tobacco Users*

**SEATTLE, Wash.** – (Nov. 17, 2009) – The American Cancer Society’s annual Great American Smokeout® encourages smokers to set Thursday, Nov. 19 as their quit date or the day they make a plan to quit for good.


Every year, on the third Thursday in November, the Great American Smokeout encourages tobacco users to take the first step to quit for a lifetime. Free & Clear can help smokers make this goal a reality with the Quit For Life® Program.

In October, the American Cancer Society joined forces with Free & Clear to offer the Quit For Life Program, an evidence-based coaching program that uses phone- and Web-based learning to support tobacco users who want to quit. The two organizations are offering the co-branded Quit For Life Program to tobacco users through employers, health plans and state public health agencies.

Paychex, with its 12,000 employees in 100 offices nationwide, has been offering the Quit For Life Program since October 2007. A survey conducted at the one-year anniversary of program implementation revealed 51 percent of the 1,291 employees enrolled had quit smoking. This success rate is 10 times greater than the success rate of quitting “cold turkey.”

“We’ve seen tremendous success with the Quit For Life Program,” Paychex director of benefits Jake Flaitz said. “In fact, out of nearly 2,000 employees who’ve enrolled in the program since we launched it two years ago, our current quit rate is about 45 percent. Free calls to a quit coach, access to online support and a quit plan customized to reflect the needs of the participant, gives our employees the best chance of quitting for good. We believe that reducing the use of tobacco is a ‘win-win’ for our employees and for Paychex.”

The Great American Smokeout grew out of an event in 1974, when the editor of the *Motocello Times* newspaper in Minnesota organized the first D-Day, or Don’t Smoke Day. A few years earlier, Arthur P. Mullaney of Randolph, Mass., asked people to give up cigarettes for a day and donate the money spent to a high school scholarship fund.



Two years after the first Don't Smoke Day, on Nov. 18, 1976, the California Division of the American Cancer Society successfully got almost 1 million smokers to quit for the day. That event marked the first of what would become an annual event across the nation in 1977.

For information about the Great American Smokeout and the American Cancer Society, visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org). Find out more about the Quit For Life® Program by visiting [www.quitnow.net](http://www.quitnow.net).

**For More Information:**

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**About Free & Clear**

Free & Clear, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Alere LLC ([www.alere.com](http://www.alere.com)) and its parent company, Inverness Medical Innovations (NYSE: IMA) ([www.invernessmedical.com](http://www.invernessmedical.com)), specializes in phone-based cognitive behavioral coaching and Web-based learning to help employers, health plans and government agencies measurably improve the overall health and productivity of their workforces. Free & Clear's evidence-based programs address modifiable health risks that contribute to chronic disease: tobacco use, poor nutrition, physical inactivity and stress. More than 50 million people have access to the Quit For Life® Program, the nation's leading tobacco cessation program, which has had its proof of effectiveness published in multiple peer-reviewed, scientific journals during the course of 25 years. The Mind & Body® Program has been developed by nationally recognized experts and is based on the most up-to-date, clinically proven science available on weight management and obesity prevention. Free & Clear is based in Seattle, Wash. More information about Free & Clear is available at [www.freeclear.com](http://www.freeclear.com).

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