

# Committee releases anti-smoking plan

**Bismarck Tribune** By Brian Duggan

The cost of a pack of cigarettes could increase, more cities could enact smoke-free policies for public places and more schools could ban smoking on campus under a five-year anti-smoking plan unveiled today.

The plan was drafted by the Tobacco Prevention and Control Advisory Committee, which organized six months ago after voters approved its creation and funding last November under Measure 3.

Kathy Mangskau, who chairs the nine-member committee, said the five-year plan will seek to reduce youth smoking and prevent more from picking up the habit while helping addicted adult smokers to quit.

North Dakota levies a 44-cent excise tax on packs of cigarettes, which is about a dollar less than the tax levied in surrounding states. The committee is looking for support to raise that tax to \$2 per pack by June 2013.

The state's smoke-free laws also would be amended under the plan so that all public places and workplaces are smoke-free.

Fargo and West Fargo both implemented city-wide smoke-free ordinances last year. Mangskau said helping other communities pass similar laws is a priority for the committee.

The committee receives \$9.3 million each year from a new wave of money coming to North Dakota that stems from the 1998 tobacco settlement lawsuit.

"We know that as long as tobacco is a few dollars a pack or a can, as long as smoking is allowed in public places and as long as there are barriers to affordable cessation, North Dakota will not significantly reduce its tobacco use," Mangskau said.

To read the full tobacco cessation plan, visit [www.atfnd.org](http://www.atfnd.org).

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