



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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COUNTY LAUNCHES MAJOR ANTI-OBESITY CAMPAIGN

1.6 Million San Diegans Are Overweight or Obese

With 1.6 million people in the region tipping the scales, the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) today launched a major obesity-prevention media campaign.

Radio and television commercials are on air promoting easier access to locally-grown fresh food, nutritious meals in schools and safe bike paths and walkways. A new website, www.HealthyWorks.org, also gives people an opportunity make positive change in their community.

“Access to healthy choices, including healthy activities, is essential to prevent obesity,” said Supervisor Pam Slater-Price, who is also Chair of the *Healthy Works* Leadership Team. “The County is committed to make the necessary changes to improve the health and well being of local residents.”

The media campaign is a component of *Healthy Works*, a County health initiative—in collaboration with numerous community, governmental, and educational organizations—focused on environmental and systems changes designed to prevent obesity and promote healthier living.

Healthy Works is the local Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) program, a \$16 million grant funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to address the obesity epidemic, a nationwide public health emergency.

“Improving the environment and the systems in place will support the positive changes residents are beginning to see in their communities,” said Supervisor Ron Roberts, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Supervisors. “We must try to ensure that our communities support healthy choices. Government, businesses, neighborhoods, families and individuals all play a role in this effort.”

Obesity has become an epidemic across the United States in the last 25 years. Locally, half of the region’s 3.2 million residents are overweight or obese.

“We will provide the opportunities and the environment to help people be healthy,” said Nick Macchione, HHS Director. “A healthier San Diego County is within reach. The County has begun implementation of the Building Better Health component of Live Well, San Diego! a 10-year strategy to improve health in our region, and *Healthy Works* is a huge building block in this strategy.”

Poor diet, lack of physical activity, and smoking are three behaviors that contribute to the four chronic diseases—heart disease, type 2 diabetes, lung disease and cancer—that are responsible for more than 50 percent of deaths in San Diego County.

“By focusing on the environment where people live, work, play, and learn, *Healthy Works* can reduce the toll of chronic diseases on San Diego County residents’ health and well being,” said Wilma Wooten, M.D., M.P.H., County Public Health Officer. “These diseases can be prevented. Sometimes a few lifestyle changes can make the difference.”

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