



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Northern Illinois Rockford Region Public Information Officers  
Media Contact: Katherine O’Toole, Media Liaison, 815-720-4213  
October 10, 2019

*This is a joint news release issued by the Northern Illinois Rockford Region Public Information Officers (NIR-PIO). NIR-PIO serves Boone, Carroll, DeKalb, Jo Daviess, Lee, Ogle, Stephenson, Whiteside, and Winnebago Counties.*

**REGIONAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS ISSUE  
STATEMENT OF CONCERN REGARDING OUTBREAK OF  
LUNG INJURY ASSOCIATED WITH E-CIGARETTE USE AND VAPING**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), state and local health departments, and other clinical and public health partners are investigating a multistate outbreak of severe lung injury associated with use of e-cigarette, or vaping products (devices, liquids, refill pods, and/or cartridges). State and local public health departments are leading the investigation and CDC is providing technical support to help systematically collect data.

The nine local health departments that comprise the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) Northern Illinois Rockford Region, are aware of, and are deeply concerned by, the growing epidemic affecting mainly our young people. We are also alarmed by the fact that this epidemic cannot be traced back to a specific company, product, or component of these vaping/e-cigarette devices.

Given this growing body of evidence and the dangers that e-cigarettes and vaping devices pose to our community, the IDPH Northern Illinois Rockford Region health departments urge all residents to:

- Refrain from using e-cigarette or vaping products.
- If you are currently using e-cigarettes containing nicotine to quit cigarette smoking, do not return to smoking cigarettes. Contact the Illinois Tobacco Quitline at 1-866-QUIT-YES for support and resources for other methods of quitting.
- If you choose to continue to use e-cigarettes, monitor for symptoms, and contact your healthcare provider if you have any concerns about these health risks.
- If you have recently used an e-cigarette or vaping product and you have symptoms like those reported in this outbreak, see a healthcare provider.
- Anyone who uses an e-cigarette or vaping product should not buy these products (e.g., e-cigarette or vaping products with THC, other cannabinoids) off the street, and should not modify or add any substances to these products that are not intended by the manufacturer.

Regardless of the ongoing investigation:

- Youth and young adults should not use e-cigarette products.
- Women who are pregnant should not use e-cigarette products.
- Adults who do not currently use tobacco products should not start using e-cigarette products.
- Adults who currently smoke or vape are encouraged to talk with their provider about quitting or call the Illinois Tobacco Quitline at 1-866-QUIT-YES.

The IDPH Northern Illinois Rockford Region health departments are working with our healthcare partners to continue to report any possible cases of e-cigarette, or vaping associated severe lung injury and to identify potential vaping devices and products to help further the investigation.

The IDPH Northern Illinois Rockford Region health departments encourage the public to submit detailed reports of any unexpected tobacco or e-cigarette-related health or product issues to the FDA via the online Safety Reporting Portal: <https://www.safetyreporting.hhs.gov/>

For additional information and guidance, go to the CDC and IDPH websites:

- IDPH - <http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/prevention-wellness/tobacco/e-cigarettes-and-vapes>
- CDC - [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic\\_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/e-cigarettes/severe-lung-disease.html)

####