



NEWSRELEASE

STORY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Paul H. Fitzgerald, Sheriff

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STORY COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE TO PARTNER WITH IOWA ABD FOR TOBACCO EDUCATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Story County, Iowa – The Story County Sheriff's Office has taken a pledge to keep tobacco out of the hands of Story County youth.

It's called the Iowa Pledge (I-Pledge), and it's a partnership with the Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division (ABD) to educate local retailers and to enforce Iowa's tobacco laws. The I-Pledge Program has helped increase statewide tobacco compliance to a rate of 93% since it began in 2000. By partnering with the ABD, the Story County Sheriff's Office will look to do its part in continuing the upward trend.

Clerks who successfully complete an online training program and pass an exam will be I-Pledge Certified and the retail establishment will receive an affirmative defense against a civil penalty if the certified clerk makes an illegal sale. To take the training or search I-Pledge certification records go to <http://ipocp.iowaabd.com:8080/portal>.

"The I-Pledge Retailer Training Program is a great way for clerks to prepare themselves to refuse illegal tobacco sales," Sheriff Paul Fitzgerald said. "The training will help retailers maintain a compliant and responsible establishment."

Also as a part of the I-Pledge Program, deputies will be conducting compliance checks on local establishments. Underage customers, under the supervision of law enforcement officials, will enter establishments and attempt to buy tobacco products. Clerks who make the illegal sale will be cited on the spot.

Criminal penalties for selling tobacco to a minor include a \$100 fine for a first offense, a \$250 fine for a second offense and a \$500 fine for third and subsequent offenses. However, handing out citations is not the intent of the Iowa Pledge Program.

"By partnering with the Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division, we hope to educate clerks and maintain a compliant retail environment in our community," Sheriff Fitzgerald said. "Moreover, we pledge to help keep tobacco out of the hands of Iowa's youth."