

April 17, 2014

**CORRECTION - The event will end at 11:30 a.m., not 1:30 p.m. as originally reported in the previous media release issued April 15, 2014.**



## Students Working Against Tobacco plans Beach Clean-up for Earth Day

SARASOTA COUNTY — In recognition of Earth Day, Sarasota County’s Students Working Against Tobacco (SWAT) Chapter will walk Siesta Key Beach picking up litter from cigarettes and other tobacco products on Saturday, April 26, from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m.

“People don’t always realize that smoking is not only bad for their health, it is bad for the environment,” said Riverview High SWAT student Faye Ramos. “This is the second year SWAT has organized a beach clean-up; we hope that more people will be aware of the negative impact tobacco is having on our community.”

Cigarettes are the most littered item in the world. The remnants of cigarettes contribute more than 4.5 trillion pieces of litter each year worldwide.

Cigarette butts littering the beaches only tell one part of the story. Cigarette butts and the remnants of tobacco leaves left over when a cigarette is extinguished contain hundreds of toxic chemicals that can leach into waterways or be ingested by wildlife.

“Tobacco use remains the No. 1 preventable cause of death in the United States, and we know that the effect does not stop there. Tobacco use negatively impacts the health of a smoker; secondhand smoke negatively impacts the health of non-smokers; and tobacco litter negatively impacts our environment,” said Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County Tobacco Prevention Program Manager Jeanette Robinson.

For more information about resources to quit smoking, visit <http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/> or call the Florida Quitline at 1-877-U-CAN-NOW to speak with a Quit Coach. For details about the local SWAT Chapter, visit <http://www.swatc.com/swat-teams/> or call 941-861-2997.



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***MEDIA NOTES:***

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