

Cigarette makers to publish new statements on health risks (Update)

October 3 2017

Major U.S. cigarette companies will soon begin publishing a series of blunt statements about the health risks of smoking as part of a court order stemming from a 1999 lawsuit brought by the federal government.

The court-ordered "corrective statements" will begin running late next month on television and in newspapers.

"Smoking kills, on average, 1,200 Americans every day," reads one of the statements. Another simply says: "Smoking is highly addictive."

The 1999 lawsuit accused cigarette makers of deceiving the public.

Altria Group Inc.—the Richmond, Virginia-based parent company of cigarette-maker Philip Morris USA—will jointly run the ads with its competitor, Reynolds American Inc., and several other companies.

Altria said the tobacco manufacturers had reached an agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice on the timing of the statements.

In a news release, Altria said the lawsuit focused on "industry conduct dating back to the 1950s."

"This industry has changed dramatically over the last 20 years, including becoming regulated by the FDA, which we supported," said Murray Garnick, Altria's executive vice president and general counsel. "We're focused on the future and, with FDA in place, working to develop less-

risky tobacco products."

The court's order requires the tobacco companies to publish five statements related to cigarette smoking. On television, the statements will appear in 30-second ads, running once each week for a year, mainly on major networks during prime time. The companies will also run full-page ads in 45 newspapers around the country over a six-month period.

The statements list various diseases linked with tobacco use. The companies also are required to say that they had "intentionally designed cigarettes with enough nicotine to create and sustain addiction."

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