

Here are the 12 states where smoking rates are 50% higher than the rest of the country

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Despite overall national declines in smoking, Americans who live in the

South and Midwest are still much more likely to smoke, and smoke more, than those living in other states, a new [report](#) shows.

A nonprofit non-smoking advocacy group has identified what it calls "Tobacco Nation," areas of the South and Midwest where smoking is 50% more common than in other states.

Truth Initiative revealed that those states are Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Ohio, Oklahoma, Tennessee and West Virginia.

"Due in part to policies that favor the [tobacco industry](#) over [public health](#), residents of 'Tobacco Nation' are too often suffering from shorter [life expectancy](#), worse indicators of health and high prevalence of tobacco use," [Barbara Schillo](#), chief research officer at Truth Initiative, said in a [statement](#).

Truth Initiative shared some hard numbers, including that about 28% of smokers live in these 12 states, even though they comprise only 21% of the U.S. population.

About 19% of adults smoke in this region, compared to 13% in other states. Young adults were similarly affected, with 11% of adults under 25 smoking compared to 8% in other states. Teens were also more likely to smoke.

Truth Initiative also found that the people in those states who smoke tend to light up more than smokers in other states, using about 53 packs in a year, on average. In other parts of the country, the average is 29 packs a year.

In turn, life expectancy is lower in these states, by about three years, at age 76.

Adults in nine of the 12 states also have rates of e-cigarettes use or vaping that are among the highest, *CNN* reported.

Truth Initiative blames the numbers on weaker local policy on tobacco prevention and cessation, *CNN* reported. Industry influence and lack of political will by those who govern are among other reasons why.

Tobacco use is a leading cause of preventable disease, disability and death, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, killing nearly a half million people annually through first- and [second-hand smoke](#).

A U.S. surgeon general [report](#) in 2020 highlighted the benefits of quitting smoking.

While [federal data](#) showed the share of adult smokers fell in 2022, e-cigarettes gained traction, *CNN* reported. Only three laws by [local governments](#) to combat vaping had been enacted within the 12 states cited by Truth Initiative.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has [more](#) on the health effects of smoking.

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