

## Deadline approaches for Sale of 'fire safe' cigarettes

AUSTIN – As of Jan. 1, 2010, all cigarettes sold in Kingsville and Bishop as well as the rest of Texas must be certified fire standard compliant.

All FSC cigarettes will be marked near the Universal Product Code (UPC) with the letters FSC.

Any manufacturer, wholesaler/distributor, or retailer who knowingly sells or offers for sale non-FSC cigarettes may be subject to a fine of up to \$100 per pack.

Fire standard compliant or "fire safe" cigarettes are designed to self-extinguish if they are left unattended or not actively being smoked.

Governor Rick Perry signed House Bill 2935 into law in June of 2007, which required all cigarettes sold in Texas be certified fire standard compliant by January 1, 2009. Enforcement of the fire-safe cigarette law will begin on January 1, 2010.

The time interval between the effective date of HB 2935 and the start of enforcement efforts allowed retailers to dispose and sell any existing inventory of non-FSC cigarettes.

Texas is among 49 states where FSC legislation is either effective or has passed legislation.

Wyoming filed FSC legislation in 2009, but it has not yet passed. The state fire marshal's office, which is a part of the Texas Department of Insurance, is responsible for all FSC cigarettes certifications, inspections, and enforcement in Texas.

"The state fire marshal's office is committed to reducing the loss of life and property due to fire and other related hazards," said State Fire Marshal Paul Maldonado.

"Fire standard compliant cigarettes will aid in the prevention of fires and reduce the loss of life and property in Texas."

For more information about fire-safe cigarettes, visit the agency website at <http://www.tdi.state.tx.us/fire/fmfiresafecig.html> or contact Roger Young in the state fire marshal's office at 512-322-3527 or e-mail: [Roger.Young@tdi.state.tx.us](mailto:Roger.Young@tdi.state.tx.us).

## What's good for Nebraska good for Texas

Gov. Rick Perry has sent a letter asking other governors to join him in an ongoing effort to assert the constitutional rights of states as guaranteed under the 10th Amendment with regard to the federal health care bill being forced through by Congress.

He urged the governors to support and join efforts by Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott and several other state attorneys general to determine the constitutionality of a compromise in the pending federal health care legislation exempting the state of Nebraska from increased Medicaid costs resulting from the bill's passage.

In Texas, this health care bill will cost up to \$21 billion over the next 10 years, adding an estimated 2 million more people to Medicaid rolls.

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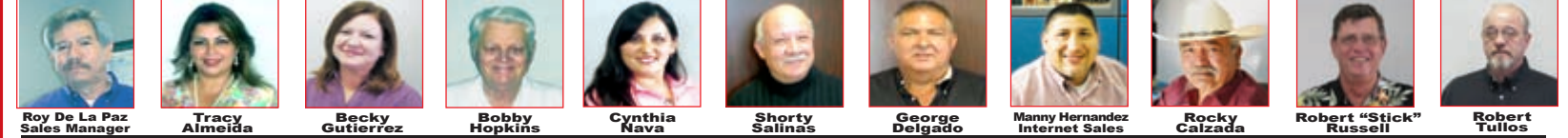
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