



## The Extra Mile

Advocating for evidence-based policies and practices to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms



Project Extra Mile has been selected as the January 2023 recipient for the

### Hy-Vee Reusable Bag Program that Supports Local Non-Profits



When you buy the \$2.50 red My Heart Reusable Bag this month at the Hy-Vee located at 9707 Q Street in Omaha, Project Extra Mile will receive a \$1 donation for each bag purchased.


## What exactly is in that drink?

*Consumer groups are inching closer towards commonsense alcohol labelling*

In what is being called “an important victory for the American public,” the U.S. Treasury Department’s Alcohol and Tobacco Tax Trade Bureau (TTB) has agreed to [issue a rulemaking](#) that will solicit public comment on requiring standardized alcohol content, calorie, and allergy labels on all beer, wine, and distilled spirits products within the next year.

The decision comes nearly 20 years after consumer advocacy groups petitioned the TTB to add these labels and months after those groups sued the agency in federal court for failing to act on [the 2003 petition](#). However, the TTB decision to renew the rulemaking appears to also stem from a 2022 recommendation in a federal report initiated by the Biden Administration to increase [competition](#), which outlined the need for increased labelling measures. The report stated that regulatory proposals “could serve public health and foster competition by providing information to consumers, such as mandatory allergen, nutrition, and ingredient labeling proposals.”

Citing the large body of evidence that alcohol consumption is known to be a source of empty calories, the original 2003 petition submitted to the TTB called for listed information on the number of calories per serving, the percent alcohol by volume, the serving size, the number of [standard drinks per container](#), and a list of all ingredients on each container. The petition argued that by including the number of standard drinks per container and a list of ingredients, consumers could better monitor their alcohol intake to avoid excessive consumption and identify any allergens present in the ingredient list that may need to be avoided for health, safety, or religious reasons.

Alcohol Facts	
 Contains <b>5</b> Servings	<b>Calories per Serving:</b> 98 Alcohol by Volume: 13% Alcohol per serving: 0.5 oz
	Serving Size: 5 fl oz
U.S. Dietary Guidelines advice on moderate drinking: no more than two drinks per day for men, one drink per day for women.	
<b>Ingredients:</b> Grapes, yeast, sulfiting agents, and sorbates.	

An example of the proposed labelling changes. Source: <https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/cheers-to-alcohol-facts-labeling-to-finally-be-addressed-by-ttb>

While these proposed advancements are a major step towards transparent alcohol labelling, even these changes will not fully reflect all the health harms known to be caused by alcohol consumption, including cancer. Years of evidence have shown that alcoholic beverages containing ethanol increase cancer risk and are known to cause at least seven different types of cancer in humans, including but not limited to breast, colon, and mouth cancer. A [recent study](#) from the American Association for Cancer Research found that only about 30% of Americans are aware of the cancer risks associated with alcoholic beverages. For this reason, [additional efforts](#) to include cancer warnings on alcohol labels are being pursued to increase awareness among the public.

The United States is not alone in its march towards more transparent labelling of alcohol and potential health effects. The Canadian Institute for Substance Use Research has been [leading the charge](#) to improve alcohol labelling in Canada to include cancer warning labels on alcohol drink containers.

Giving consumers more information about how alcohol impacts their bodies is a positive step, but it needs to be paired with evidence-based policies, such as increasing alcohol taxes, reducing days and times of sale, and limiting alcohol outlet density if we hope to address the community harms that accompany excessive consumption.

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## New Year, New Senators

*13 senators will begin their first term in 2023*

The state of Nebraska is one-of-a-kind due to its unique [unicameral](#) legislature. As a consequence of only having one legislative chamber, there are fewer policymakers (49), which provides both the public and industry easier access to these elected officials and an increased ability to influence their understanding and view of issues. Oftentimes, industry positions are not aligned with public health and safety, especially when it comes to substance misuse. Because of this, citizens must seize every opportunity to meet with senators and their staff to help them better understand what's happening in their communities in order to ensure that policymakers aren't only hearing one side of the story. We must also recognize that industries have more resources and employ lobbyists that office in Lincoln, resulting in legislative offices hearing industry talking points multiple times throughout the year.

While federal law prohibits the use of federal grant dollars to be used for lobbying, [educating policymakers](#) and helping them understand evidence-based policies and practices and how they have been implemented in other states and regions – whether within a school district, healthcare system, law enforcement agency, or even at the state or national level – can lead them to making better-informed decisions down the road and is not considered lobbying.

“We believe there is a need for public policy that strengthens the well-being of our state’s children, families, and communities,” said Laurie Ponce Lage with the [Coalition for a Strong Nebraska \(CSN\)](#). “Nonprofits, particularly those that work directly with individuals and communities, have first-hand knowledge of policy decision outcomes. CSN works to advance the participation of nonprofits in policy advocacy to ensure the most effective systemic changes for the benefit of those we serve.”

Prior to the start of the 2023 legislative session, Project Extra Mile spent time educating policymakers on the extensive community harms related to excessive alcohol consumption and how senators can be a part of the solution by embracing evidence-based policies at the state level that have the potential to save hundreds of lives each year. The organization met with six current legislative offices and 8 of 13 incoming lawmakers to provide statistics, trends, and research regarding excessive alcohol consumption – one of the biggest public health challenges facing our state.

Conversations touched on the fact that excessive alcohol use is the third leading cause of preventable death in the US, with Nebraska averaging more than 700 deaths per year; the fact that alcohol is a [Class 1 carcinogen](#) (along with tobacco and asbestos) that causes at least seven types of cancer (an estimated 10% of alcohol-related deaths in Nebraska are due to cancer); that Nebraska businesses and taxpayers paid [\\$1.16 billion](#) in 2010 alone in economic costs from excessive drinking; and that Nebraska ranks as the second-worst state in the nation for self-reported impaired driving episodes with [955 per 1,000 population](#), which is nearly double the national average. To reduce these harms and consequences of excessive alcohol consumption, recommended evidence-based policies and practices are outlined in the [Community Guide](#) and supported by many national and international organizations.

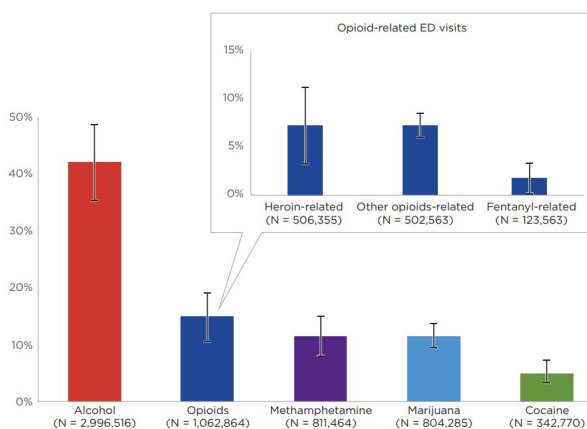
Coalitions across our state are understandably busy ensuring that near-term grant objectives are successfully met, but at what cost are we sacrificing those long-term, sustainable, environmental solutions that will continue to save lives after our grants have long expired? Building relationships in Lincoln and sharing our local stories and data along with scientifically proven strategies that work won't guarantee safer and healthier neighborhoods, but it will get us closer to achieving that goal.

To be a part of the policy conversations about what is happening in Nebraska around alcohol, please join us at our next coalition meeting on **Wednesday, January 18th at 9:00 a.m.** A policy work group meeting will follow at 10:15. Both meetings will take place at UNO's Community Engagement Center in Room 230. If your organization would like to learn more about how to become more involved in advocacy, please contact us at [info@projectextramile.org](mailto:info@projectextramile.org).

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## Research Brief:

Figure 5.1 Estimated percentages and counts of drug-related ED visits by the top five drugs, 2021



A recent [Drug Abuse Warning Network \(DAWN\) report](#) highlighted that 41.7%, or 2.99 million, of drug-related emergency department (ED) visits involved alcohol in 2021 -- the next highest category was opioids at 14.79%. A majority of the alcohol-involved ED visitors were patients aged 26-44. [Between 2015-2019](#) there were over 140,000 alcohol-attributable deaths in the United States as a result of excessive alcohol use and over 3.5 million years of potential life lost. In Nebraska, this equated to 720 people and over 17,000 years of

potential life lost. Preventing this tragic loss of life can be achieved by focusing on the three ['Best Buys' by the World Health Organization](#): (1) increase excise taxes on alcoholic beverages, (2) enact and enforce bans or comprehensive restrictions on exposure to alcohol advertising, and (3) enact and enforce restrictions on the physical availability of alcohol in sales outlets.

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## Coalition Member Spotlight - Jim Timm

Jim Timm is the Executive Director of the Nebraska

Broadcasters Association and has been an active coalition member since December 2015. With Jim's partnership, Project Extra Mile has increased awareness among adults about the criminal penalties of providing alcohol to minors as a part of its *No Free Ride* campaign. Jim has been a valuable resource in understanding how to improve our outreach to the community via a diverse range of media. He also received the Media Award during the organization's Recognition Dinner last year for his efforts. We appreciate Jim's partnership and his continued support for reducing alcohol-related harms in our state.



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**Please join us!**



# Omaha Metro Coalition Meeting

Wednesday, January 18, 2023  
9:00 a.m.

Please join us in person  
**as we discuss and  
review the upcoming  
2023 Legislative Session.**

**Thank you for your involvement!**

## Meeting Location:

**UNO's Community  
Engagement Center**

*6400 University Drive South  
Room 230, Omaha, NE  
Parking Lot E*

**For more information:  
(402) 963-9047**



[www.projectextramile.org](http://www.projectextramile.org) • [info@projectextramile.org](mailto:info@projectextramile.org)

# Policy Work Group Meeting:

Wednesday, January 18, 2023

*Immediately following the  
monthly Coalition meeting  
(approx. 10:00 am)*

**For more information:  
(402) 963-9047**

## PROJECT EXTRA MILE 2023 COALITION MEETINGS

JANUARY 18TH  
FEBRUARY 8TH  
MARCH 8TH  
APRIL 12TH  
MAY 10TH  
JUNE 14TH  
NO MEETING IN JULY  
AUGUST 9TH  
SEPTEMBER 13TH  
OCTOBER 11TH  
NOVEMBER 8TH  
DECEMBER 13TH

## LOOKING FORWARD TO CONNECTING WITH YOU IN 2023



**MEETINGS HELD AT  
UNO'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT CENTER  
6400 UNIVERSITY DRIVE SOUTH, ROOM 230**



Project Extra Mile | 6001 Dodge Street, CEC 228, Omaha, NE 68182-0600

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