Public buildings and businesses will go smoke-free on Sunday, July 1, in accordance with House Act 1149 that was passed by the Indiana State Legislature in March.

Scott County Commissioners adopted the state ordinance on May 23. Each county and municipality has the option of making the local ordinance stronger, which requires that they adopt the ordinance they create. The Austin City Council was to consider the measure on Monday night, June 25, at its regular business meeting. Scottsburg councilmen will not be considering a stronger law than what Commissioners have adopted.

Scott County Health Department staff has attended an Indiana State Department of Health training and awareness seminar about the new state law. “We are available to assist business owners with their questions and information. The Health Department has a basic kit with signs and general information available,” advised Patti Hall, the department’s Preparedness Coordinator and Office Manager. She and Brittany Combs, Scott County Public Health Nurse, have been preparing for the July 1 start date.

To talk to Hall or Combs and obtain a basic kit, call the Health Department at 752-8455 or visit the office, located just north of the Scott Memorial Hospital campus off U.S. Highway 31 North, Scottsburg.

Most public entities must adhere to the new law. Those include governmental buildings, most businesses, hotels, bowling alleys, restaurants and places of employment, regardless of how many employees they have.

Signs which businesses and government buildings must have posted on all public entrances are available on-line at the Alcohol/Tobacco Commission website at http://www.in.gov/atc. To view the entire bill, visit http://www.in.gov/legislative/bill/2012/HE/HE1149.1.html.

Hall went on to explain that some businesses can be exempted from the law. Casinos, bars with no family room, hookah bars, cigar bars and private membership clubs must apply for an exemption before the law goes into effect.

If no approval is obtained, the establishment must be smoke-free until the exemption is granted by the Indiana State Police Excise Police Department. Additionally, until they are granted an exemption, such sites cannot allow anyone under the age of 18 to enter.

Employers must post signs at each public entrance stating that no smoking is allowed within eight feet of any public entrance. Two no smoking signs must be conspicuously displayed inside the business building.

All such signs must be in place by July 1, noted Hall.

Exempt businesses must display a sign that says smoking is allowed on the premises.

A new website has been established to provide updated information. It is www.breatheindiana.com. Business kits can be requested at this website.

For information about smoking cessation, persons can visit www.quitnowindiana.com or www.in.gov/quitline. Individuals can also call a toll-free line at 1-800-QUITNOW.