



## A burning issue

Prosecutors allege cigarette makers lied about the dangers of smoking, the addictive nature of nicotine and their efforts to get kids to smoke. A look at major developments in the government's \$280 billion suit against the tobacco industry:

September: Justice Department files lawsuit against major cigarette manufacturers, the Council for Tobacco Research and the Tobacco Institute.

June: Bush administration officials say they are considering attempting to settle suit, citing concerns about the strength of the case. Health advocates accuse the administration of undercutting the case.

May: Judge rules the Justice Department can seek \$280 billion as a remedy in its suit against cigarette manufacturers. The industry has filed an appeal of that ruling.

July: Judge rules a previous settlement the industry reached with states does not protect the industry from the separate, federal suit.

July: Judge fines Philip Morris USA and its parent company, Altria Group, \$2.8 million for deleting e-mails that may be relevant in the suit.

