

Fact Sheet

Nebraska Clean Indoor Air Act of 2008

5/21/09

- Nebraska's smoke-free air law will protect public health and welfare by prohibiting smoking in public places and places of employment. The law becomes effective on June 1, 2009.

The following information is based on the Nebraska Adult Tobacco Survey/Social Climate Survey 2008/2009, conducted June – September, 2008.

- 80% of all Nebraskans (smokers and non-smokers alike) support the Nebraska Smoke-Free Worksite Law.
- 82% of Nebraskans think having a law prohibiting smoking inside is important.
- 86% of Nebraskans agree that restaurants and bars in Nebraska will be healthier for employees and customers.

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- The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Public Health has established the Website: smokefree.ne.gov
 - smokefree.ne.gov as a clearinghouse for information about the law. On the site:
 - Business owners can find materials to share with their employees and customers.
 - Organizations can find materials to place in their newsletters.
 - The public can find information on how the law will impact them.
 - DHHS has also established a toll-free information line, 1-877-633-7331 and e-mail address: smoke.free@dhhs.ne.gov as additional ways to communicate and ask questions about the law.

General Statements

- Secondhand smoke is a mix of the smoke from the burning ends of cigarettes, cigars and pipes and the smoke exhaled by someone who is smoking.
- According to the 2006 U.S. Surgeon General's report, "*The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*," exposure to secondhand smoke causes disease and premature death in children and adults who do not smoke. The report concluded that **there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke.**
 - Nebraska's smoke-free air law will protect all Nebraskans – whether they're an employee, a customer or both – from secondhand smoke.

- There is mounting evidence that communities become healthier once smoke-free laws go into effect. Pueblo, Colorado instituted a smoke-free air ordinance in 2003 and researchers from the CDC found that heart attack hospitalizations decreased 41 percent over three years. The CDC study represents a dramatic vote of confidence for what a smoke-free air law can achieve.
- As of January 4, a total of **15** states, along with Puerto Rico and Washington D.C, have a state law *in effect* that requires workplaces, restaurants, **and** bars to be 100% smoke-free ... this doesn't include Nebraska and Montana which have laws that aren't in effect yet. Since then, South Dakota legislators have passed a strong smoke-free air law that will go into effect on July 1, 2009.
- This is important protection for Nebraskans from lung cancer, heart disease, emphysema and other illnesses caused by tobacco use and exposure.
- In Nebraska and the U.S., tobacco is the leading preventable cause of death. Smoking related medical costs in Nebraska total \$537 million every year.
- Quitting smoking can dramatically affect a person's quality of life. Studies show that reducing the U.S. smoking rate over the last 40 years by nearly half (from 40% to 20%) has added 1.1 years of life expectancy to the average American and saved billions in health-related expenses.
- Smoking causes productivity losses total \$499 million annually in Nebraska.
- According to the CDC, the single most cost-effective health insurance benefit for adults that an employer can provide is paying for tobacco cessation. The typical cost of a tobacco cessation program is less than 50 cents per smoker per month.
- 80% of Nebraskans, age 18 and older, are non-smokers. In other words, the adult smoking prevalence rate is 20%. (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, 2007)

Sources: Tobacco Free Nebraska, Nebraska C.A.R.E.S program, American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation, American Cancer Society and Nebraska Medical Association