



## SECONDHAND SMOKE: THE HEALTH RISKS -- FACT SHEET #1

Secondhand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable death in America. It contains more than 4,000 chemicals and more than 69 carcinogens and causes cancer, stroke, heart disease, sudden infant death syndrome, respiratory ailments and even inner ear infections in children. Many workers still have no choice over their working conditions when it comes to secondhand smoke, and they are paying a heavy toll with their health.

### Consider These Facts

- Restaurant workers are exposed to more secondhand smoke than other workers are. (*Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, June 2002).
- Secondhand smoke kills an estimated 65,000 people annually. (National Cancer Institute *Monograph No 10*, Preface)
- People who are exposed to secondhand smoke have 25 to 35 percent higher coronary death rates. Non-smoking workers in a smoking facility have a 16-19 percent increased risk of developing lung cancer. (*Tobacco Smoke and Involuntary Smoking*; International Agency for Research on Cancer; Vol. 83, Sections 5.4 and 5.2; June 2002)
- Children exposed to secondhand smoke have higher rates of respiratory infections and irritations, and exposure to secondhand smoke increases the number and severity of asthma attacks in children and adults with asthma. (Environmental Protection Agency)
- Smoke-filled areas can have up to six times the air pollution as a busy highway in America. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *It's Time to Stop Being a Passive Victim*, 1993)
- It's estimated that one non-smoker dies from exposure to secondhand smoke for every eight smokers who die from their tobacco use. (Glantz, S. & Parmley, W. *AHA Circulation*, 1991; 83: 1-12)

### The Ventilation System Myth

- Ventilation systems cannot remove all secondhand smoke and its toxins from the air, no matter how good they are. Scientific information proves this point. (Regents of the University of California)
- There are no safe levels of exposure to secondhand smoke. Even if the smoke is removed, the toxins remain. (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers, Inc., "ASHRAE 62-1999: Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality," see Addendum 62e)
- Smoke knows no boundaries; smoky air just gets re-circulated, and non-smoking sections do not eliminate non-smokers' exposure to secondhand smoke. (*The Health Consequences of Involuntary Smoking: A Report of the U.S. Surgeon General*, 1986)

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The Campaign for a Smoke-Free Oak Park is working to protect the  
health of workers and patrons through a smoke-free workplace ordinance in Oak Park.  
<http://www.oakparkcleanair.com> [info@oakparkcleanair.com](mailto:info@oakparkcleanair.com)

**SECONDHAND SMOKE KILLS. EVERYONE DESERVES SMOKE-FREE INDOOR AIR.**