

RESTAURANT TIMES & HEALTH NEWS



In this Issue:

Does Secondhand Smoke Harm Food Workers?

Restaurants and bars are among the least healthy places to work in America because of employees' exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke.

Sources:

- 1 Centers For Disease Control, 1999.
- 2 National Cancer Institute, 1999.
- 3 *International Journal of Cancer*, 2001.
- 4 Quebec Health Board, 1999. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 2001.
- 5 *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1998.
- 6 Centers for Disease Control BRFSS, 2000.
- 7 National Restaurant Association, 1993.
- 8 Cornell University School of Hotel and Restaurant Administration, 1996.

GASP of Colorado (Group to Alleviate Smoking Pollution) is a statewide nonprofit that promotes smoke-free policies, educates the public about the dangers of secondhand smoke, and publishes the *Colorado Guide to Smoke-Free Dining*.

While 70 percent of Colorado's workplaces today are smoke-free¹, smoking is still allowed in many restaurants and bars. Separate ventilation systems may reduce customers' annoyance, but no ventilation system on the market can remove all the chemicals from tobacco smoke and fully protect workers' health. Restaurant workers still must breathe the smoke as they serve customers in smoking areas.

What is Secondhand Smoke?

Secondhand smoke is a brew of thousands of chemicals that drift from lighted tobacco. It includes poisons such as hydrogen cyanide, carbon monoxide, arsenic and formaldehyde, plus dozens of other known carcinogens.

Day-after-day exposure to tobacco smoke in the workplace can cause severe health problems for food service employees including:

- Breathing secondhand smoke greatly boosts the risk of lung cancer, heart disease, asthma, nasal sinus cancer, and other diseases.
- Extended exposure to secondhand smoke can triple their risk of developing lung cancer.² Furthermore, it does not take a lifetime for an employee to experience the consequences of breathing secondhand smoke — and exposure to as few as 26 smoking customers daily during the course of a year will double the risk of developing lung cancer.³
- A career spent working in a smoky restaurant or bar increases the risk of dying from heart disease as compared to the general population. Lung and heart function can start deteriorating in just a single work shift!⁴

Caring for Workers' Health

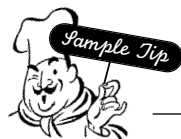
It pays to show concern for employees' well being by making bars and restaurants smoke-free because it rapidly improves respiratory health.⁵ Workers lose less work time to illness. Nonsmoking employees stop complaining about having to work in the smoking section. Furthermore, an employer's liability risk from an employee developing a smoking-related illness is eliminated.

Going smoke-free can also be good for the restaurant or bar's bottom line. Eighty percent of Colorado's adult population does not smoke⁶, and 56 percent of adults say they would prefer to eat in restaurants where the food could be enjoyed without any tobacco smoke.⁷ Given their greater numbers, nonsmokers account for nearly 2.5 times more overall restaurant revenue than smokers.⁸

There are already more than 4,500 restaurants and bars in Colorado where customers can enjoy themselves free of tobacco smoke — and where employees do not risk their health by being exposed to secondhand smoke.

It's easy to join the employers who care. Contact GASP at (303) 444-9799 or visit www.GASPforair.org.

How to Adopt a SmokeFree Policy



Provide advance notice about the new policy and pick a significant date.

Please check any FREE items you wish to receive.

- Tips on how to become a smoke-free restaurant.
- Positive 4-color no-smoking signs _____ (quantity).
_____ for use on clear glass _____ for use on solid surfaces
- How secondhand smoke affects restaurant employees.
- More information about GASP of Colorado.

Becoming or already smoke-free?

- We are planning to become smoke-free on _____ (date).
- My establishment is 100% smoke-free inside. Please add it to the GASP's Internet list of 4,500 smoke-free dining places in Colorado.



PLEASE PRINT

Owner's Name _____

Restaurant Name _____

Telephone (area code) _____

Address/P.O. Box _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Web site _____

Food Type _____

Please use one to three words to describe the food you serve (American, Continental, Oriental, Mexican, Pizza, Sandwiches, Fast Food, etc.)

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Published by GASP of Colorado
The Group to Alleviate Smoking Pollution
2885 Aurora Avenue, Suite 37
Boulder, CO 80303

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
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