

Six Month Anniversary of Smokefree Air

November marks the six month anniversary of smokefree air in Michigan. The Campaign for Smokefree Air (CSA) is celebrating by reaching out to media to tell the success story of smokefree air and to, once again, remind lawmakers that they made the right decision to pass smokefree air legislation. The increased media outreach will focus on the positive results from the Michigan Department of Community Health studies on compliance and public opinion as well as the American Cancer Society's Great American Smoke Out.

In addition to increased media outreach, CSA is encouraging advocates to write letters-to-the editors of local papers about your support for smokefree air.

In coming months, CSA also will continue to promote smokefree air through e-newsletters to advocates, outreach to lawmakers and possible events to celebrate the success of smokefree air.

Advocates interested in writing a letter-to-the-editor should contact Matt Phelan at matt.phelan@cancer.org. ■



Michigan celebrates six months of smokefree air.

New Studies Show Wide Support For Smokefree Air Law

In August, the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) surveyed 6,900 Michigan residents within 76 Michigan counties on their opinions about the new smokefree air law. Of those surveyed, more than 70 percent were in support of the smokefree air law. These results show an increase of public support in comparison to results of a 2009 CSA poll that showed 66 percent of Michigan residents were in favor of smokefree air laws.

In addition, more than 80 percent surveyed agreed that secondhand smoke was a serious health threat to non-smokers. Notably, more than 85 percent of participants stated that they dine out just as much or more often than they did before Michigan's smokefree air law took effect.

The study also monitored the number of complaints reported within the first six months of the law. Results showed just over 550 complaints were made about smoking in smokefree places. This is significantly less than our neighboring state, Ohio, where more than 30,000 complaints were received in the first year of its smokefree air law.

MDCH also monitored compliance of the law in restaurants, bars and bowling alleys throughout the state. The observational study of 964 establishments within 59 counties found that 95 percent of these businesses were compliant with the law. The study also found that more than 85 percent of these businesses took measures to comply with the law including posting 'no smoking' signs, and removing ashtrays and smoking paraphernalia.

The Campaign for Smokefree Air is pleased with the results of the Michigan Department of Community Health's initial studies and hopes support for law will continue to grow. ■



A Michigan Department of Community Health survey showed that 70 percent of Michigan residents are in favor of smokefree laws.

Great American Smokeout: A great time to quit

November 18th marks the American Cancer Society's 35th annual Great American Smokeout. This annual event encourages smokers to take the opportunity to quit or make a plan to quit and stop ingesting hazardous chemicals that can cause cancer. Currently, 19.6 percent of Michigan's population are smokers. Many of these people want to quit but don't know how to where to start.

Now that Michigan is a smokefree state, the lack of smoke in public places makes it even easier to quit. A recent survey conducted by the Michigan Department of Community Health found that more than half of the 2,289 smokers surveyed quit or have tried to quit since May 1. These are great strides and CSA is encouraging Michigan residents to keep up the great work.

Quitting is not easy, but it can be done. To have the best chance of quitting successfully, you need to know what you're up against, what your options are, and where to go for help. During the 35th Great American Smokeout, we are reminding people not to quit quitting and that the American Cancer Society stands ready 24 hours a day, seven days a week with information, resources and support to assist in smoking cessation. Smokers who want to quit can call the American Cancer Society Quit For Life® Program at 1-800-227-2345 for tobacco cessation and coaching services that can help increase their chances of quitting for good. The Society also has online tools at www.cancer.org/Smokeout, such as a crave button and a quit clock to help smokers plan towards kicking the habit for good.

Every day without smoking is a step toward a healthier and longer life. ■



The American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout encourages people to make a plan to quit smoking.

Smokefree Progress

In the last six months, since Michigan implemented the Dr. Ron Davis Smokefree Air law, the state of South Dakota as well as several municipalities across the country have passed smokefree air legislation. On November 2, South Dakota voters passed a ballot proposal which made South Dakota workplaces, including restaurants, bars, and gaming facilities, smokefree, passing two-to-one.



South Dakota is the latest state to pass comprehensive smokefree legislation.

The cities of Jefferson City and Fulton, Missouri; Devil's Lake, North Dakota and San Angelo, Texas also voted to pass smokefree legislation.

"Voters throughout the state of South Dakota as well as in the cities of Jefferson City and Fulton, Missouri; Devil's Lake, North Dakota and San Angelo, Texas have sent a clear message during the midterm elections: smokefree air is not a partisan issue, it's a health issue, and all workers and patrons have the right to breathe smokefree air," said Judy Stewart, Campaign for Smokefree Air spokesperson. "While Republicans, Democrats and Independents are trying to figure out what the November 2nd election results mean for them, one thing is abundantly clear: voters in states and cities throughout the country want comprehensive smokefree air, regardless of their political preferences."

Voters in South Dakota supporting smokefree workplaces outnumbered opponents two-to-one. Similarly, the recent MDCH poll shows 70 percent of Michigan residents support our statewide smokefree air law. The strong public support for smokefree air simply underscores that Michigan lawmakers did the right thing in making Michigan air smokefree. ■