

Clean Air Act Talking Points

Health

- There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.
- Tobacco smoke contains a deadly mixture of more than 7,000 chemicals and compounds, of which hundreds are toxic and at least 70 cause cancer.
- Exposure to tobacco smoke - even occasional smoking or secondhand smoke - causes immediate damage to your body that can lead to serious illness or death, according to a recent report released by U.S. Surgeon General.
- Secondhand smoke exposure exacerbates many health conditions, including but not limited to asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and women who are pregnant.

Public Opinion (Support for the Law)

- More than eight months after the enactment of Michigan's smoke-free air law, it remains very popular, and businesses and residents are showing an extremely high rate of compliance. Ohio public health departments received 36,558 complaints on non-compliance in the first year after going smoke-free, whereas Michigan health departments received fewer than 800 statewide.
- As reported in the Detroit Free Press: Survey conducted by MDCH and Local Health Departments indicate over 75% of Michigan residents support the new Smoke Free Law.
- More than 85 percent of those surveyed also said there was either no change or that they went out to eat more often in restaurants and bars after the law went into effect.

Impact on Business

- According to the recent Dept. of Treasury report, there appears to be no clear economic impact on the hospitality industry as a result of the smoke-free law. The report was an analysis of tax receipts statewide, based on real, hard data. The report states, "There is no clear trend from the sales or withholding tax collections from other retail eating and drinking establishments that would indicate the smoking ban has adversely affected these businesses."
- Data from other states show the best measure of the law's impact is through evaluating data that has been compiled over at least one full year following implementation of a smoke-free air law. We look forward to Michigan's one-year report.
- According to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission, the number of liquor licenses that wound up in escrow — an indicator of when establishments shut down or stop serving alcohol — decreased from May 1 to November 12, 2010, compared with the same period the previous year, down to 240 from 278.

Enforcement

- Local health departments across the state received 583 complaints about patrons smoking in restaurants or bars since the smoke-free law was implemented in May, according to a complaint survey recently conducted by the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH). Of the 583 complaints received, local health departments issued 158 citations to either individuals or restaurant and bar owners. Violators of the law are subject to penalties of \$100 for the first offense and \$500 for subsequent offenses.
- In a recently conducted compliance study, the MDCH randomly selected 964 food establishments in 59 counties and found that 95 percent of them were smoke free and in compliance with the law. More than 85 percent of the same businesses, which included restaurants, bars and bowling alleys, took measures (smoke-free signage, removal of ashtrays, etc.) to comply with the law.