Full text available at: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smoking_ban

Smoking ban

Smoking bans are public policies, including criminal laws and occupational safety and health regulations, which restrict tobacco smoking in workplaces and public spaces.

Rationale

The rationale cited for smoking bans is the protection of workers, in particular, from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke, which include an increased risk of heart disease, cancer, emphysema and other chronic and acute diseases.[1] Laws implementing bans on indoor smoking have been introduced by many countries in various forms over the years, with legislators citing scientific evidence that shows tobacco smoking is often harmful to the smokers themselves and to those inhaling second-hand smoke.

In addition, such laws may affect health care costs,[2] improve work productivity and lower the overall cost of labor in a community, thus making a community more attractive for bringing new jobs into the area and keeping current jobs and employers in an area. In Indiana for example, the state's economic development agency wrote into its 2006 plan for acceleration of economic growth that it encourages cities and towns to adopt local smoke-free workplace laws as a means of promoting job growth in communities.

Additional rationales for smoking restrictions include reduced risk of fire in areas with explosive hazards or where flammable materials are handled, cleanliness in places where food or pharmaceuticals, semiconductors or precision instruments and machinery are produced, decreased legal liability, potentially reduced energy use via decreased ventilation needs, reduced quantities of litter, helping promote healthier environments, and to make it easier for smokers to quit.[3]

Medical and scientific basis for bans

Main article: Passive Smoking

Research has generated evidence that secondhand smoke causes the same problems as direct smoking, including lung cancer, cardiovascular disease and lung ailments such as emphysema, bronchitis and asthma.[4] Specifically, meta-analyses show that lifelong non-smokers with partners who smoke in the home have a 20–30% greater risk of lung cancer than non-smokers who live with non-smokers. Non-smokers exposed to cigarette smoke in the workplace have an increased lung cancer risk of 16–19%.[5]

A study issued in 2002 by the International Agency for Research on Cancer of the World Health Organization concluded that non-smokers are exposed to the same carcinogens as active smokers.[6] Sidestream smoke contains 69 known carcinogens, particularly benzopyrene and other polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, and radioactive decay products, such as polonium 210.[7] Several well-established carcinogens have been shown by the tobacco companies' own research to be present at higher concentrations in secondhand smoke than in mainstream smoke.[8]

Scientific organizations confirming the harmful effects of secondhand smoke include the U.S. National Cancer Institute,[9] the U.S. Centers for Disease Control,[10] the U.S. National Institutes of Health,[11] the United States Surgeon General,[12] and the World Health Organization.[13]