

Dickinson County Elected & Municipal Officials



Smoking/ Secondhand Smoke Survey Results



Acknowledgements

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INTRODUCTION

In April 2005, Dickinson County elected officials were surveyed to determine their beliefs about secondhand smoke and smoke-free policies. Appointed municipal officials completed a smoking/no smoking status survey of municipal buildings. The surveys were conducted by the Iron Mountain Student Government Class along with the Dickinson-Iron Tobacco Free Community Coalition. Information obtained from the surveys is used to further advance policy and environmental change activities in the community related to secondhand smoke exposure.

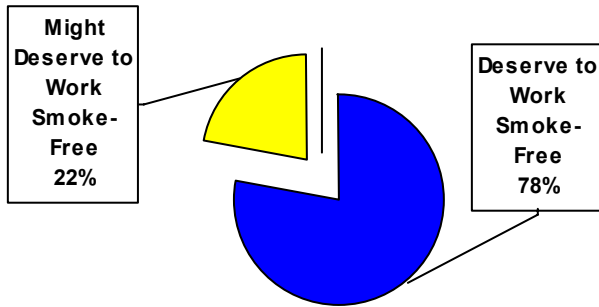
DATA SOURCES AND METHODS

Data was gathered through two specific surveys. The elected official survey on secondhand smoke and smoke-free policy asked officials their opinions on secondhand smoke issues and whether certain workers deserved to work in smoke-free environments or not. It also addressed their thoughts on whether a smoke-free business would save money or cost money. It also asked how concerned elected officials are about the health effects of secondhand smoke on them and their family. And finally, the question “Does local government have an obligation to protect public health, including restricting smoking?” was asked. The second survey specifically addressed the smoking status of municipal buildings and whether written policies were in place. It also asked questions on whether the municipality owned or leased buildings, has an ordinance/policy on smoking, what their current written ordinance/policy is on smoking inside municipal buildings, and what their current written ordinance/policy is on smoking in municipal vehicles. In addition, it was requested that officials include a copy of their written municipal building smoking policy if they had one. Two were received. A total of 24 secondhand smoke and smoke-free policy surveys were sent to elected officials with a return rate of 38%, (9 surveys). Eleven (11) municipal building surveys were sent with a return rate of 64% (7 surveys). The Iron Mountain High School Student Government Class sent out the surveys to the elected and municipal officials in Dickinson County. Officials had 2-3 weeks to reply to the surveys by either mailing them or faxing them back to be tabulated.

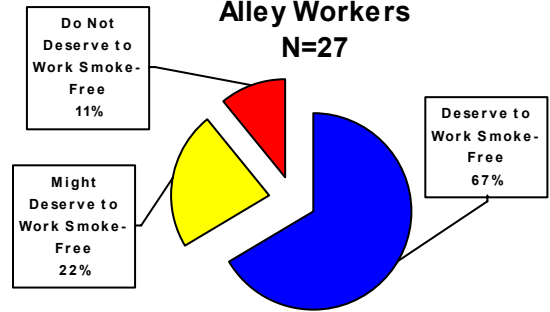
Results from the Secondhand Smoke and Smoke-Free Policy Survey

Who deserves to work in a smoke-free environment? Survey respondents were asked if they thought that city/county employees, office workers, health care workers, light industry workers, restaurant workers, and bowling alley workers deserve to work in a smoke-free environment. Seventy eight (78%) percent of respondents strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that city/county employees, office workers, and health care workers deserved to work in a smoke-free environment. Twenty two (22%) percent said that maybe these workers deserved to work in a smoke-free environment. Sixty seven (67 %) percent of respondents strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that light industry workers, restaurant workers, and bowling alley workers deserve to work in a smoke-free environment. Twenty two (22%) percent felt that these workers might deserve to work in a smoke-free environment, and 11% felt they did not deserve such an environment at all. Only 22% of respondents strongly agreed or somewhat agreed that nightclub/entertainment and bar workers deserve to work in a smoke-free environment. Sixty one (61%) percent of respondents said that nightclub/entertainment and bar workers might deserve to work in a smoke-free environment, and 11% felt they did not deserve such an environment at all.

**City/County, Office, HCW Employee
N=27**



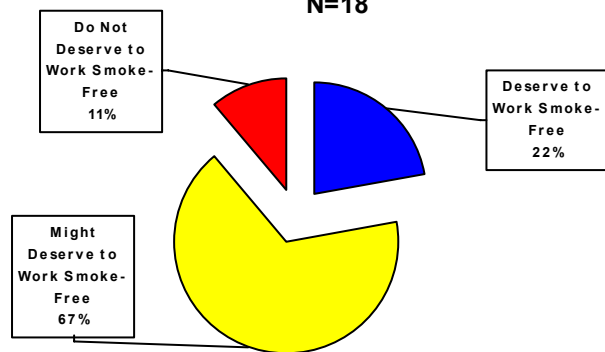
**Light Industry, Restaurant, Bowling Alley Workers
N=27**



Discussion:

We found that a majority of elected officials feel that most types of workers deserve or might deserve to work in a smokefree environment. However, it is disturbing that as many as 11% of elected official respondents felt that light industry, restaurant, bowling alley, nightclub, entertainment and bar workers do not deserve this same treatment. A few respondents felt that workers who knew that a workplace allowed smoking had made the choice to work in a smoking environment. Studies have consistently shown that the need to earn a living is the overall motivating factor

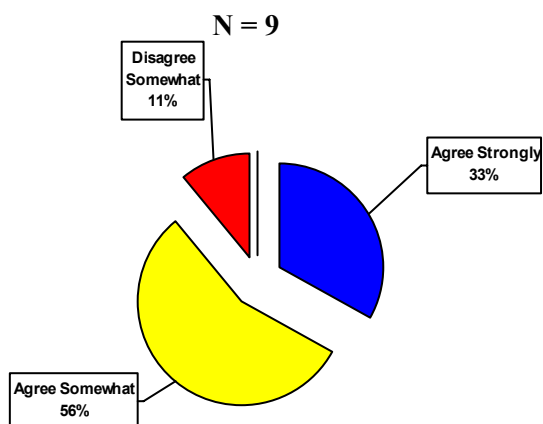
**Nightclub/Entertainment & Bar Workers
N=18**



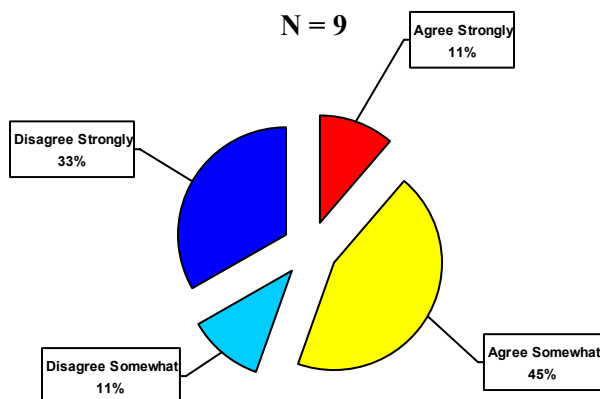
for workers who accept work in a smoking environment. They do not choose to work for an employer because the employer has decided that his workplace permits smoking. Worker health complaints are often related to indoor air quality. More than 59% of non-smoking employees experience discomfort caused by secondhand smoke in workplaces that permit smoking. Restaurant and bar workers are disproportionately affected by secondhand smoke. Studies show that levels of secondhand smoke are 1.6 to 2.0 times higher in restaurants and 3.9 to 6.1 times higher in bars (that's equivalent to smoking 2 packs of cigarettes during one shift) than in office work places or other businesses. It has been estimated that passive smoking in the workplace poses 200 times the acceptable risk for lung cancer, and 2,000 times the acceptable risk for heart disease. Workers exposed to secondhand smoke on the job are 34% more likely to get lung cancer. Sources: Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Do smoke-free businesses save money? Eighty nine (89%) percent of local elected officials believe that smoke-free businesses save money, but 55% also agreed that going smoke-free could cost businesses money. The responses are highlighted below:

Requiring worksites/businesses to be smoke-free would save businesses money:



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Discussion:

What is the truth about a smoke-free environment saving or costing businesses money? Smoke-free laws add value to establishments. Restaurants in smoke-free cities have a higher market value at resale (an average of 16% higher) than comparable restaurants located in smoke-filled cities.

The U.S. EPA estimates that smoke-free restaurants can expect to save about \$190 per 1,000 square feet each year in lower cleaning and maintenance costs. The EPA also estimates a savings of \$4 billion to \$8 billion per year in building operations and maintenance cost if comprehensive smoke-free indoor air policies were adopted nationwide.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development estimates that construction and maintenance costs are 7% higher in buildings that allow smoking than in buildings that are smoke-free.

The National Fire Protection Association found that in 1998 smoking materials caused 8,700 fires in non-residential structures resulting in a direct property damage of \$60.5 million. *Source: Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights*

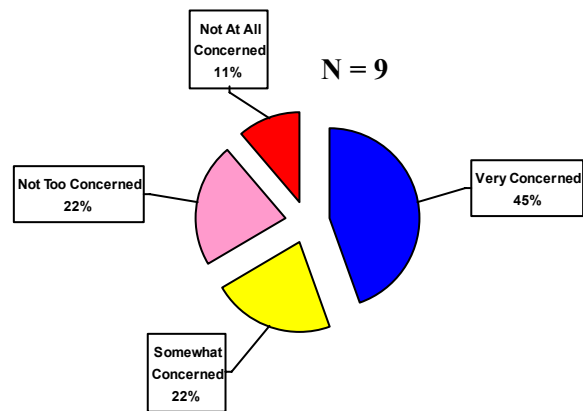
Accompanying the growth in smoke-free laws nationwide has been a parallel increase in false allegations from the cigarette companies and their allies that smoke-free laws will hurt local economies and businesses. In fact, numerous careful scientific and economic analyses show that smoke-free laws do not hurt restaurant and bar patronage, employment, sales, or profits. At worst, the laws have no effect at all, and they sometimes even produce slightly positive trends. *Source: Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids*

As of April 2005, eleven states (California, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, New York, Florida, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Utah and Idaho) and 4,842 municipalities in the United States have passed laws that prohibit smoking in almost all workplaces, restaurants, and bars. Three years ago, on January 2, 2002, El Paso, Texas (2000 population: 563,662),

implemented an ordinance banning smoking in all public places and workplaces, including restaurants and bars. The El Paso smoking ban is the strongest smoke-free indoor air ordinance in Texas and includes stipulations for enforcement of the ban by firefighting and law enforcement agencies, with fines of up to \$500 for ordinance violations. To assess whether the El Paso smoking ban affected restaurant and bar revenues, the Texas Department of Health (TDH) and CDC analyzed sales tax and mixed-beverage tax data during the 12 years preceding and 1 year after the smoking ban was implemented. No statistically significant changes in restaurant and bar revenues occurred after the smoking ban took effect. These findings are consistent with those from studies of smoking bans in other U.S. cities. Local public health officials can use these data to support implementation of smoke-free environments as recommended by the Task Force on Community Preventive Services. *Source: American for Nonsmokers' Rights, Morbidity & Mortality Weekly Report by the CDC taken from the Smoke-Free Environments Law Project in Michigan*

Are local elected officials concerned about the health effects of secondhand smoke?

Sixty- six (66%) percent of local elected officials that responded said they were concerned, and 33% were not too concerned.



Discussion:

Secondhand smoke is a threat to everyone’s health, especially infants and young children. Every day, over 15 million children in the U.S. are exposed to secondhand smoke in the home, with countless others exposed in public places. Children of any age who are exposed to secondhand smoke are more likely to suffer from asthma, middle ear infections, and respiratory infections. They are also at risk of developing lung cancer or heart disease later in life. The U.S. EPA estimates that every year, between 150,000 and 300,000 children under 1 ½ years of age get bronchitis or pneumonia from breathing secondhand tobacco smoke exposure, resulting in thousands of hospitalizations. In children under the age of 18, secondhand smoke exposure also results in more coughing and wheezing, a small but significant decrease in lung function, and an increase in fluid in the middle ear. Children with asthma have more frequent and more severe asthma attacks because of exposure to secondhand smoke, which is also a risk factor for the onset of asthma in children who did not previously have symptoms.

In adults, secondhand smoke exposure is a significant factor in illnesses and diseases including: lung cancer, heart disease, respiratory illness, asthma attacks, impotence, stroke and emphysema. *Sources: CDC, U.S. EPA, New England Journal of Medicine, Chest, British Medical Journal, American Heart Association, International Journal of Cancer*

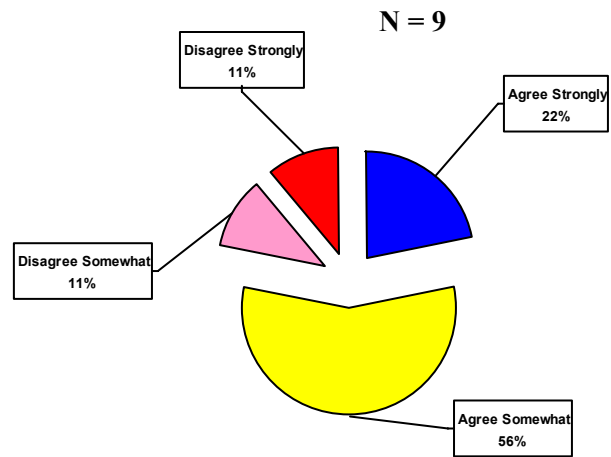
Do our local elected officials believe that government has an obligation to protect public health, including restricting smoking? Seventy eight percent (78%) of local elected officials responding to the survey believe local government does have an obligation to protect public health, including restricting smoking. Only 22% disagreed.

Discussion:

Local government does have an obligation to protect the public’s health and to take steps to eliminate or reduce the exposure to serious health hazards. Voluntary programs are not used to control other health problems, such as toxic wastes, sanitation, asbestos, or radioactive exposure, and therefore, should also not be used to control exposure to secondhand smoke.

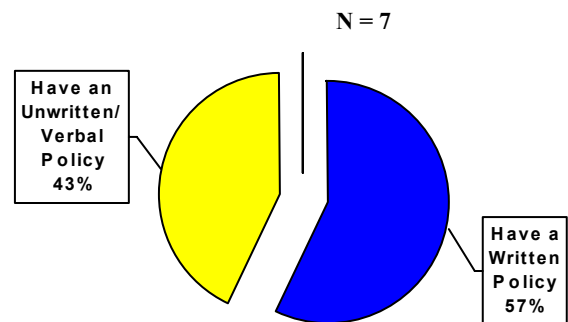
Without government in our lives, we would have total chaos and anarchy. In democracies, there is a need for some level of government protection. Without this protection people would be able to do whatever they please no matter how it affected others. This protection benefits everybody in the long run—consumer and business owner. For instance, if the government did not have any health regulations to cover the foods and beverages we purchase, there would probably be many more outbreaks of botulism, food poisoning, and other diseases.

In our society, we try to control all of the dangerous elements. Murderers are imprisoned because they constitute a threat to our welfare. We do not allow people to poison our water if we can avoid it. We do not allow people to operate motor vehicles while under the influence of alcohol and other drugs. The air we breathe should get the same consideration. Government has a right and an obligation to protect the health, welfare, and safety of its citizens. *Source: Bar & Restaurant Employees against Tobacco Hazards (BREATH)*

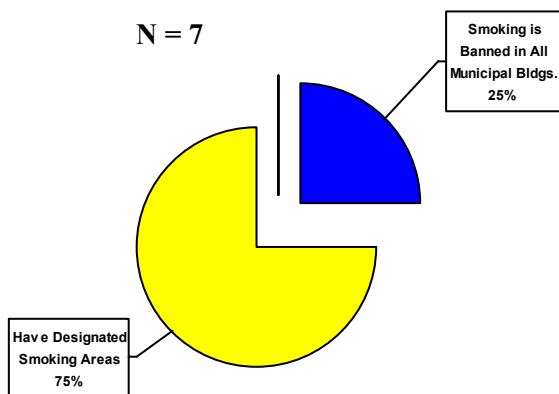


Municipal Buildings Survey Results:

All respondents to this survey indicated that their municipality owned all of its municipal buildings. **Fifty seven (57%) indicated that they have a written policy on smoking. Forty three (43%) indicated that they have an unwritten/verbal policy on smoking.**



Of those who had written policies (57%) addressing smoking inside municipal buildings, **25% stated that smoking is banned in all municipal buildings.** The other **75%** stated that smoking is not banned in any municipal building, but it is **restricted to designated smoking areas.**



With regard to designated smoking areas, the Surgeon General has consistently stated that designated smoking sections reduce, but do not eliminate, nonsmokers' exposure to secondhand smoke. Air can move freely between smoking and nonsmoking sections carrying smoke with it. Even if the sections are physically separated, shared ventilation systems still carry smoke from room to room. Trying to segregate smoking in a restaurant is like trying to have a non-chlorinated section in a chlorinated pool. *Source: Bar & Restaurant*

Employees against Tobacco Hazards (BREATH)

What about ventilation systems? Restaurants are ventilated in accordance with standards established by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). The ASHRAE standards treat secondhand smoke as an irritant rather than a health risk. They are designed to remove the odor of smoke, but do not remove all of the disease-causing agents. Tobacco smoke contains many odorless chemicals and gases. Just because you cannot see or smell smoke does not mean you are not at risk. *Source: Bar & Restaurant Employees against Tobacco Hazards (BREATH)*

Michigan Clean Indoor Air Laws cover 228 municipalities and over 23% of the state's population: As of April 20, 2005, the following 9 counties and the City of Marquette have enacted Clean Indoor Air laws: Ingham, Washtenaw, Genesee, Chippewa, Charlevoix, Emmet, Otsego, Antrim, and Wayne County minus Detroit. Together, this constitutes 61 cities, 23 villages, 134 townships, and 10 unincorporated communities: a total of 228 municipalities. These counties and the City of Marquette have a total population of 2,337,481 or 23.5% of the total Michigan population of 9,934,444. To put this in perspective, a total of 17 states and the District of Columbia each have populations that are less than the 2,337,481 people now covered by Michigan's local Clean Indoor Air laws. The model regulation upon which each of these is based can be accessed at <http://www.tcsg.org/ModelCountyCIA.htm>. *Source: Smoke-Free Environment Law Project*

All respondents indicated that there are no policies related to smoking in municipal vehicles. The survey results suggest that municipalities may not be fully informed about the requirements of Michigan's Clean Indoor Air Act. The act **requires** each municipality to have a written policy on file, regardless of whether they are smoke-free or have designated smoking areas. The act does not require a written policy concerning smoking in municipal vehicles.

Conclusions:

While there are some mixed opinions about whether adopting smoke-free policies is good for business or will cost businesses money, everyone does agree that secondhand smoke can be harmful to one's health. The majority agree that government has a duty to protect the public's health, while only a few do not want to see government interference.

With respect to written vs. unwritten policies, several municipalities were not aware that Michigan's Clean Indoor Air Act requires a written policy. The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department will assist these municipalities with developing a smoking/no smoking policy within the next several months, and will continue these efforts into the next fiscal year. We will also work with those who would like to implement a smoke-free policy. Iron County elected officials and municipalities will be surveyed next year.

The Bottom Line: Secondhand smoke is a serious health risk. As much as 468,000 tons of tobacco is burned indoors each year. Secondhand smoke is the only source of air-borne nicotine and contains more than 4,000 chemical compounds; more than 40 are known to cause cancer. Secondhand smoke includes such notorious chemicals as formaldehyde, cyanide, arsenic, carbon monoxide, methane, benzene, and radioactive polonium-210. Levels of carcinogens increase in nonsmokers when they visit a public setting where smoking is allowed. *Source: U.S. EPA, Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers and Prevention*

The U.S. EPA classifies secondhand smoke as a Group A carcinogen – a substance known to cause cancer in humans – the same category as radon and asbestos. There is no safe level of exposure for Group A toxins.

Medical studies have shown secondhand smoke to be a significant factor in illnesses and diseases, including (in adults): lung cancer, heart disease, respiratory illness, asthma attacks, impotence, stroke and emphysema. In children – asthma, low birth weight, cavities, hearing loss, ear infections, pneumonia, bronchitis, SIDS and other respiratory illnesses. *Source: New England Journal of Medicine, AHA, U.S. EPA, International Journal of Cancer, American Journal of Public Health, CDC*

Recommendations: The Dickinson-Iron District Health Department encourages elected officials, and municipalities to protect the health of the public and employees by adopting smoke-free policies for both buildings and municipal vehicles. We encourage businesses to also develop smoke-free policies that protect the health of their customers and employees. Going smoke-free is a positive investment. For questions about this survey and/or to receive more information on smoke-free policy development, please contact Kelly Rumpf, Health Educator at the health department at 779-7234. In addition, please access the Smoke-Free Environments Law Project's website at <http://www.tcsg.org/sfelp/home.htm> if you have questions or seek additional information on the legal issues concerning secondhand smoke.