

Health Awareness

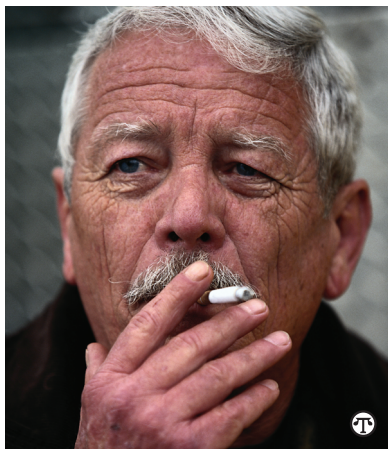
Americans Support Smoke-Free Parks And Beaches

(NAPSA)—A recent survey shows a sizable number of Americans want to breathe fresh air when they are outdoors—not secondhand smoke.

According to the National Social Climate Survey of Tobacco Control, more than two-thirds of Americans feel that smoking should not be allowed within 20 feet of a doorway—a finding that is increasingly relevant as more indoor spaces have gone smoke-free.

The survey also found that 43 percent of Americans feel that beaches should be smoke-free, and 36.5 percent are in favor of smoking bans in parks. “This annual survey is a consistent reality check on how America perceives tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke,” said Cheryl G. Heaton, president and CEO of Legacy, a national public health organization. “This year’s survey focus on outdoor spaces reminds us that passive smoking is a public health threat, whether in a bar, restaurant, office or even at the beach or in a park.”

According to the Americans for Nonsmokers’ Rights, 100 municipalities and the state of Maine prohibit smoking on public beaches and 470 have enacted smoking bans in city parks. According to Legacy, secondhand smoke (SHS) is a mixture of smoke given off by the burning end of cigarettes, pipes or cigars, and smoke exhaled from the lungs of smokers, which can involuntarily be inhaled by nonsmokers.



More public spaces are becoming smoke-free as evidence grows about the dangers of secondhand smoke.

The U.S. Surgeon General has concluded that SHS is a major health risk to nonsmokers and in 1992 the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency classified SHS as a Group A carcinogen, meaning it is known to cause cancer in humans. There is no safe level of exposure.

SHS contains over 4,000 chemical compounds including formaldehyde, cyanide, arsenic, carbon monoxide, methane and benzene. Among the chemicals identified in cigarette smoke, 11 are known human carcinogens.

Exposure can be particularly damaging for infants and children, whose respiratory rates are higher than those of adults.

For more information, visit www.LegacyForHealth.org.