



TOBACCO FREE KANSAS
COALITION

Contact: Mary Jayne Hellebust
Work (785) 272-8396
Cell (785) 633-5014
mjhellebust@tobaccofreekansas.org

KANSAS SMOKE FREE LAW IMPROVES AIR QUALITY

STATEWIDE STUDY SHOWS DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT IN BARS AND RESTAURANTS

Topeka, KS 1.21.11 - A new study shows air quality at Kansas bars and restaurants showed a 94% decrease in indoor air particle pollution from smoking since Kansas restricted public smoking last July. According to the report this reduction in exposure to toxic tobacco smoke will result in improved quality of life and health outcomes for Kansas workers and residents.

Indoor air quality was sampled in bars and restaurants in six Kansas communities before and after the Kansas Clean Indoor Air Act was enacted on July 1st, 2010. The samples were taken in Wichita, Topeka, Pittsburg, Emporia, Kansas City, Great Bend and Liberal. (Results from Great Bend and Liberal were combined for study purposes.) The study analysis was conducted by nationally recognized indoor air quality researcher Mark Travers, PhD, MS of the Roswell Park Cancer Institute on behalf of the Tobacco Free Kansas Coalition.

“The results are very clear,” said TFKC Executive Director, Mary Jayne Hellebust. This report shows the Kansas smoke free law is working. It is having a positive health impact. Customers and employees in all areas of Kansas are protected now from the dangers of second hand smoke in public places.”

The study measured fine particulate matter known as PM_{2.5}. Burning cigarettes emit massive numbers of these particles over 300 times smaller than the width of a human hair. This toxic pollutant produced by cigarettes can penetrate deep inside the lungs and contains thousands of compounds including the carcinogen benzo(a)pyrene.

The study showed employees working full time in the locations with indoor smoking before the law were exposed to levels of air pollution 4.4 times higher than safe annual levels established by the Environment Protection Agency. Testing done after the law went into effect found that 97% of the bars and restaurants had good or moderate air quality.

Hellebust said the findings are significant in light of the 2010 US Surgeon General’s report, www.surgeongeneral.gov that stated the toxic chemicals in cigarette smoke, even occasional smoking or secondhand smoke, causes immediate damage that can lead to serious illness or death. The toxins are carried by the bloodstream to every organ in the body. Over time the chemicals and toxins damage DNA which can lead to cancer and disease. In addition, people with restricted arteries inhaling even small amounts of tobacco smoke could experience a heart attack.

In the Kansas study, trained staff used state-of-the-art portable electronic monitors to make precise measurements of toxic airborne particles in the same businesses before and after the clean indoor air policy was adopted. The majority of the testing was done on weekends when the businesses were most likely to be busy and more employees and customers could potentially be exposed to secondhand smoke.

For the executive summary, full report and graphs on the air quality testing results in each community go to:
<http://tobaccofreekansas.org>

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James Gardner, MD

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Ken Davis

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Treasurer
John P. Smith

Mary Jayne Hellebust, Executive Director
5375 SW 7th Street, Ste. 100; Topeka, KS 66606
Phone (785) 272-8396 * Fax (785) 272-5870 * www.tobaccofreekansas.org

