



## **Second-Hand Smoke in Public Places: Why Ventilation is NOT a Solution**

### **The Facts about Ventilation**

- There are currently no official indoor air quality standards that deal with second-hand smoke because there is no viable mechanism to ventilate or clean the air of the toxic substances in secondhand smoke.<sup>1</sup>
- Ventilation systems take away some of the smell or sight of tobacco smoke, but they do not deal with the harmful chemicals that are invisible and odorless. What that really means is that ventilation may dilute tobacco smoke, but it does not eliminate the health risks.<sup>2</sup>
- Even if a smoking section is located in a separate room, regular ventilation systems can circulate the chemicals into the non-smoking rooms.
- Researchers in the U.S. proposed an indoor air quality standard designed to protect from lung cancer. Using this model, engineers determined that it would cost hundreds of thousands of dollars per year to use this standard and create tornado-like levels of ventilation inside.<sup>3</sup> This obviously not a viable option - but that's what it would take to protect people's health.

### **Why DSRs Are Not a Viable Option**

- If smokers are restricted to a Designated Smoking Room (DSR), servers will work in environments where almost everyone is a smoker, thereby increasing their health risks, not to mention those of the patrons.
- DSRs have to be equipped with a ventilation system separate from the one for the rest of the building, and it must vent under negative pressure and directly to the outdoors. DSRs cost well over \$10,000 to build, making them out of reach for all but the most lucrative businesses. They therefore make for an unlevel playing field.
- Allowing for DSRs is a short-term solution to a long-term problem which will eventually be regulated out of existence. Going 100% smoke-free achieves the same goal of protection much more effectively, with very little cost to taxpayers. And, according to numerous studies based on sales tax data from smoke-free cities, there is no economic hardship to stable businesses. A smoke-free by-law is also much more easily enforced, thereby making it by far the best solution all around.

**There is only one way to eliminate secondhand smoke from indoor air: remove the source. You can help make sure that a 100% Smoke-Free By-law is implemented in Ottawa by logging onto [www.smokefreeottawa.com](http://www.smokefreeottawa.com) to express your support or call the Public Health Information Line at 722-2242.**



<sup>1</sup> Repace, J., "Can Ventilation Control Secondhand Smoke in the Hospitality Industry?" June 2000, p. 43

<sup>2</sup> Physicians for a Smoke Free Canada, "Secondhand Smoke", September 1999

<sup>3</sup> Stanwick, R., Stevenson, D., Bender, C.; Capital Regional District Smoking Control Bylaw, July 1996, found at: <http://www.crd.bc.ca/health/mokeby.htm>