



NEWS RELEASE

Thousands Support Smoke-Free Outdoor Spaces

Ottawa, January 16, 2012 – In celebration of **National Non-Smoking Week** (January 15-21, 2012), the Ottawa Council on Smoking and Health (OCSH) will present more than 2,600 postcards signed by Ottawa residents and tourists in support of smoke-free outdoor spaces to the Ottawa Board of Health tonight before delivering the postcards to Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson's office tomorrow.

“Ottawa workers and residents are ready and waiting for smoke-free patios, parks, beaches and playgrounds,” says Suzanne Friedlaender, president of the OCSH. “Our postcard campaign supports the results of a recent Ipsos Reid survey¹ on smoke-free outdoor spaces and reaffirms the community's widespread enthusiasm for a smoke-free outdoor bylaw.”

The OCSH will present the postcards to the Ottawa Board of Health on Monday, January 16, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. in the Champlain Room, Ottawa City Hall, 110 Laurier Avenue West. The OCSH will then deliver the postcards to Mayor Jim Watson on Tuesday, January 17, 2012.

Ottawa residents and visitors signed postcards addressed to Mayor Jim Watson:

“As an ex-smoker, parent and asthmatic, I'd love the clean air space and it's less risk for us addicts!” ~ Jennifer

“I have COPD, so smoke-free environments are critical for me!!” ~ Don

“I would love to enjoy myself on a patio on a lovely day but I cannot breathe.” ~ Joanna

“My two young boys would appreciate smoke-free playgrounds.” ~ Joanne

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in Ottawa. The 2010 U.S. Surgeon General Report states that there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke, even outdoors.

“Exposure to second-hand smoke on patios is a workplace health and safety issue for hospitality workers,” says Friedlaender. “It is also a significant health risk for the public, especially children, seniors and individuals suffering from heart and lung disease, cancer and other chronic illnesses.”

¹ Ottawa Public Health. *Smoke-Free Spaces Survey Results*. September 2011. Ottawa, Ontario.
http://www.ottawa.ca/health_safety/living/dat/tobacco/results_en.html

Ottawa lags far behind a growing list of Canadian cities and provinces that have smoke-free patios, parks, playgrounds, beaches, and building doorways.

Smoke-free spaces encourage smokers to quit and to stay smoke-free.

The OCSH is a local volunteer group that has advocated for smoke-free environments for more than 30 years.

For details on the OCSH's smoke-free outdoor spaces campaign: www.smokefreeottawa.com.

For details on National Non-Smoking Week: www.nnsw.ca.

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