



## Second-Hand Smoke: Know the Facts

### How dangerous is second-hand smoke (SHS)?

- According to the World Health Organization, there is no safe level of exposure to SHS.
- Tobacco smoke contains over 4000 chemicals, over 50 of which are known to cause cancer.
- It is estimated that for every 8 smokers who die from smoking, 1 non-smoker dies from being exposed to SHS. This translates to approximately 4,400 deaths each year. <sup>(1)</sup>

### What is SHS?

- SHS is the smoke that is exhaled by a smoker as well as the smoke that comes from burning tobacco.
- There is no ventilation or filter system that can clear the air of SHS.
- SHS can cling to surfaces such as fabrics, carpet and furniture leaving behind toxic chemicals.

### What are the health effects of SHS?

- SHS can cause sore eye and throat, nasal irritation, headaches, coughing and wheezing, nausea and dizziness.
- SHS can make allergies worse, trigger asthma attacks and increase your chances of getting bronchitis and pneumonia
- Exposure to SHS among adults is associated with several types of cancer, respiratory illness and heart disease.

### What can I do about SHS?

- Create a smoke-free environment by not allowing smoking in your home or car.
- Avoid smoke-filled spaces.
- Talk with your landlord or neighbor if SHS is entering into your home.

### Where can I get more information?

[www.ottawa.ca/health](http://www.ottawa.ca/health)

[www.smokefreehousingon.ca](http://www.smokefreehousingon.ca)

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/tobac-tabac/second/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hc-ps/tobac-tabac/second/index-eng.php)

(1) Smoke-Free Ontario Scientific Advisory Committee. Evidence to Guide Action: Comprehensive Tobacco Control in Ontario Report. 2010.