



Second-Hand Smoke in Public Places:

The Business Case for Going 100% Smoke-Free

You May Be Skeptical

Somehow, it just doesn't seem to make sense that the hospitality industry does NOT lose business when bars and restaurants go smoke-free - but it is indeed true. Study after independent study, based on sales tax receipts, confirms it. Sure, just after the by-law is implemented, businesses that are already in trouble will feel the effects. But, after a short adjustment period most businesses get back to their usual level of sales and many even increase sales, based on a whole new market of people who were staying home because they don't like smoke-filled rooms - and there are more of these people than you'd imagine.

Evidence from Scientific Studies

- Just 2.5 years after bars went smoke-free in California, 91% of bar patrons were either going to bars more often or had not changed their bar-going behavior as a result of the law. On average, bar patrons are now staying longer at bars. Support for the law almost doubled among smokers since 1998, increasing from 24% to 44%.¹

In general, studies show that after going smoke-free:

- Customer turnover is greater.
- Insurance costs are reduced.
- Cleaning costs are lower, there is less damage to furniture and equipment, and less risk of fire.

What Ottawa Has to Say

- Support for a smoke-free by-law that will make the following public places 100% smoke-free is at an all-time high: restaurants/cafes (71%); bowling alleys (70%); bingo halls (64%); casinos (64%); pool halls (60%); and bars/lounges that primarily serve drinks (57%).²
- In response to the question "Would you frequent the following places more or less often specifically because there was no smoking allowed?", the following percentages of people polled stated that they would go more often or there would be no difference in their patronage: bingo halls (91%); casinos (91%); pubs (88%); bowling alleys (88%); restaurants (87%); bars (86%); and pool halls (86%).³
- In the cases of restaurants, pubs and bars, a full 60%, 53% and 45% (respectively) of those surveyed said that they would frequent these establishments more often, compared to the 13%, 13% and 13% who said they would go less often.⁴

Given that smokers are less than 22% of the Ottawa adult population, the increase in patronage by nonsmokers will more than make up for any potential decrease in patronage by smokers.

Having 100% Smoke-Free bars and restaurants creates a level playing field that is good for everybody's bottom line. You can help make sure that a 100% Smoke-Free By-law is implemented in Ottawa by logging onto www.smokefreeottawa.com for more information or call the Public Health Information Line at 722-2242.



¹ "Support for Smoke-Free Bars Grows Stronger in California", Business Wire, October 16, 2000

² Environmental Tobacco Smoke and Smoking By-laws in the New City of Ottawa, An Overview of Survey Results from 1996, 1996-97, 1999 and 2000, Region of Ottawa-Carleton Health Department, December 29, 2000

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.