

An Observational Study of Compliance With North Dakota's Smoke-Free Law



The Law

- ▶ On Aug. 1, 2005, a new smoke-free law went into effect in North Dakota requiring most public places and workplaces to be smoke-free, with some exemptions. The exemptions include stand-alone bars; separately enclosed bars in restaurants, hotels and bowling centers; and hotel and motel rooms and other lodging establishments.



The Study

- ▶ The North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) determined it was important to measure the impact of the new law in protecting nonsmokers from secondhand smoke. The NDDoH commissioned Healthy Communities International (HCI) of Minot State University to conduct an observational study of compliance with the law one year after the law went into effect.

The study assessed the impact of the smoke-free law on exposure to secondhand smoke in restaurants, bowling alleys, bingo halls and bars across the state and monitored changes in the workplace environment that supported a smoke-free policy (i.e., posting signs and removing ashtrays).



The Outcome

- ▶ Overall compliance with the law was high. One hundred percent of bingo halls and bowling alleys were complying with the law, and 98 percent of restaurants were complying.

However, compliance rates decreased dramatically in co-located establishments, with 70 percent compliance in bar areas of restaurants, 75 percent compliance in dining areas of bowling alleys, and 58 percent compliance in bar areas of bowling alleys.

Conditions resulting in the non-compliance included permitting smoking in areas required to be smoke-free; not separately enclosing co-located bars; and not keeping doors of co-located establishments closed.





The Process

- ▶ HCI conducted an observational study of 220 hospitality venues between July and September 2006. Up to six establishments – including restaurants, bowling alleys, bingo halls and bars – in each of the state's 53 counties were observed by trained field workers. The establishments were surveyed in this way to ensure that all counties in the state were equally represented.



The Challenge

- ▶ Even though there was a high rate of compliance with the law, exposure to secondhand smoke still occurred in establishments that were intended to be smoke-free.

Observers reported a smoke odor in several facilities that were co-located with other establishments, indicating that smoke drift is occurring through shared ventilation systems or doors that do not remain shut.

North Dakotans who work in or visit establishments that permit smoking or that allow smoking illegally continue to be exposed to the dangers of secondhand smoke.



For the complete text of this study, *An Observational Study of Compliance with North Dakota's Smoke-Free Law*, visit

www.ndhealth.gov/tobacco/Reports/Compliance_Report_2007.pdf.



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