Benefits of Smokefree and Vapefree Air
Fact Sheet

Tobacco Control Program • January 2020

Secondhand Smoke Causes Disease and Death

• Secondhand smoke is the smoke from burning tobacco products such as cigarettes, cigars and pipes and is also the smoke that has been exhaled by the person smoking
• Tobacco smoke contains over 7,000 chemicals, including hundreds that are toxic and at least 70 that are known to cause cancer
• The US Surgeon General has determined there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Even brief exposure can be harmful to the health of nonsmokers
• Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS*) produce an aerosol when someone is vaping, which travels much the same way as secondhand smoke
• ENDS aerosol is NOT harmless—it can contain harmful and potentially harmful chemicals including carcinogens such as formaldehyde and acrolein and toxic heavy metals including lead and cadmium as well as nicotine

Smoke- and Vape Free Policies:

• Reduce exposure to secondhand smoke and aerosol for both nonsmokers and tobacco users
• Prevent youth from starting to use tobacco
• Help smokers quit
• Reduce tobacco-related disease and death, reducing health care costs that are currently $2.03 billion in Connecticut each year, of which $520.8 million is Medicaid

• Marijuana smoke is NOT harmless—smoking marijuana creates harmful secondhand smoke, and it contains significantly higher levels of toxic compounds than tobacco smoke, including ammonia and hydrogen cyanide

Smoke- and vapefree policies can be adopted by any owner, landlord, employer or property manager to protect everyone on their property from exposure to secondhand smoke and aerosol

Smoke- and vapefree policies prohibit smoking and vaping in indoor spaces and designated areas.
Smokefree policies should include all combustible tobacco products, END/e-cigarettes, and marijuana

The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the international standard-setting organization for indoor air quality and ventilation, recently updated its standards to include marijuana smoke and e-cigarette aerosol in its definition of environmental tobacco smoke.

Banning all smoking activity is the only way to effectively eliminate the health risks associated with indoor exposure

Non-smokers who breathe secondhand smoke are exposed to many of the same toxins and carcinogens as smokers

Health effects in children include:

- More frequent and severe asthma attacks
- Respiratory infections, including bronchitis and pneumonia
- Ear Infections
- Greater risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

Health effects in adults include:

- Heart disease, stroke and lung cancer
- Increased risk of heart attack, especially in people with pre-existing heart disease
- Death from heart disease and lung cancer—over 41,000 adult nonsmokers die in the US each year from these diseases caused by secondhand tobacco smoke exposure

Other Facts:

- Most Connecticut residents do not smoke, vape or use tobacco, however many are exposed to secondhand smoke or aerosol at work, school and in other public places
- Almost half (48%) of nonsmoking Connecticut middle and high school students report breathing in secondhand smoke on at least one day during the past week, including 36% in public places, 30% at work, and 17% at school
- 30% of nonsmoking adults in Connecticut report being exposed to secondhand smoke in public places
- Youth are less likely to start using tobacco in a smokefree environment; the less often youth see tobacco use the less likely they are to use it

100% Smokefree and Vapefree Places Are the Most Effective Way to Fully Prevent Anyone from Exposure to Secondhand Smoke and Aerosol
*ENDS is an electronic device that may be used to simulate smoking in the delivery of nicotine or other substances to a person inhaling from the device, and includes, but is not limited to, an electronic or e-cigarette, electronic cigar, electronic cigarillo, electronic pipe, electronic hookah, etc.

References