

Dear Colleague –

Thank you for your interest in North Carolina's Smoke-Free Dining Campaign.

The goal of the Campaign is to offer your county a low-cost way of protecting your population from secondhand smoke by visibly promoting smoke-free dining opportunities to your citizens. This logo, visibly displayed in restaurants and other public places will let citizens know it is free of secondhand smoke. It will give those who have concerns about the health effects of cigarette smoke a simple way to avoid it when they dine out in your county.

This program was originally developed and implemented by Deborah Dolan (formerly Cerrito) and the Wake County Project ASSIST Coalition. Deborah is also a former consultant for the Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch. Ann Houston Staples, CHES, with the Branch, can answer your questions about the program. You can reach Staples at (704) 543-2347 or ann.staples@ncmail.net

In the photo to the right, Deborah Dolan is shown with Arthur Gordon, owner of Irregardless Cafe in Raleigh at the Kickoff of the Wake County campaign.



Why Participate?

Tobacco smoke is known to cause health problems in non-smokers, such as heart disease, heart attack, lung disease and lung cancer. The Surgeon General's Report released in 2006 warns that there is no known safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Those with known heart disease or risk factors for heart disease are especially vulnerable, as short-term exposures to secondhand smoke could trigger a heart attack. Infants and young children also increase their risk of developing asthma, upper respiratory infections and ear infections with exposure to secondhand smoke.

Studies show that North Carolinians support smoke-free dining. A 2006 poll by Elon University showed that 84.3% of N.C. adults either agreed or strongly agreed that people eating in a restaurant should be free from secondhand smoke. 76.8% of those polled said that smoke-free status would make them more likely to visit a restaurant or would not impact their decision on where to eat.

How Does the Smoke-Free Dining Campaign Work?

The local health department or local coalition develops a list of restaurants in the county that provide smoke-free dining and post the list on the web, promoting the website through paid and earned media. One great way to do this is by participating in the Restaurant Heart Health Survey (NC RHHS).

Smoke-free restaurants receive a decal to place on their door or window and a certificate to post near their sanitation grade. They also receive the benefits of being listed on the website that is being promoted throughout the county.

What do we get?

There are several pieces on this disc that should help you.

- 1) Order information for the restaurant door decals. We have given you a price list and a contact for ordering the stickers. You can order the generic North Carolina stickers, or have them customized for your county.
- 2) Artwork for the certificate to give to participating restaurants.
- 3) A letter you can localize to use to contact restaurants that are opening in your county requesting that they open smoke-free, along with a post card for them to return to you. You can get the list of new restaurants from your environmental health folks.
- 4) A letter for smoke-free restaurants to include in the mailing with the decal and certificate.
- 5) Artwork for a general postcard, billboard, cinema slide, and a PowerPoint Presentation for you to use in your community.
- 6) A “Swiss cheese” news release you can localize to launch your program.
- 7) Information on the Heart Healthy Restaurant Survey, which you can use to monitor restaurants in your county for smoke-free status and healthy menu options.
- 8) Order information for stickers your volunteers can place on their restaurant bills to complain about secondhand smoke, or congratulate a restaurant for being smoke-free.

What if we need help?

Members of the NC Secondhand Smoke Action Team and the Tobacco Prevention and Control Branch’s consultants are available to assist you. Feel free to contact Action Team Chair Ann Houston Staples at Ann.Staples@ncmail.net or (704) 543-2347.

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