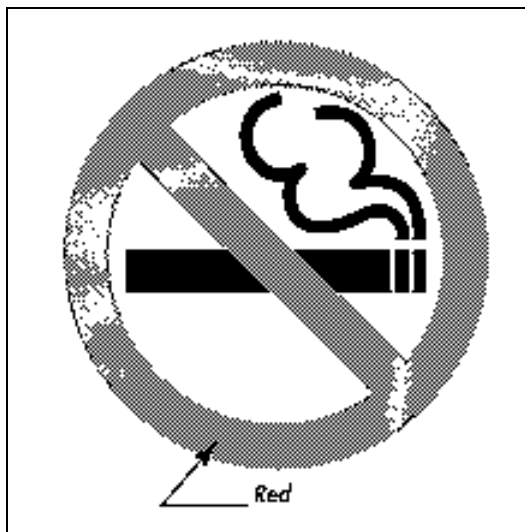


WPE 1 A GUIDE TO A SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE



OBJECTIVE

To advise of the health risks from environmental tobacco smoke and provide guidelines for eliminating smoking from the workplace.

BACKGROUND

Each year more than 19,000¹ Australians die from smoking-related illnesses. Increasing scientific evidence indicates that inhalation of Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) poses the same health threats to people as active smoking². Scientific evidence also indicates that there is no safe level of exposure to ETS³.

In October 2002, the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (NOHSC) released a statement stating that given the health risks of ETS, all Australian workplaces should be made smoke-free as soon as possible. A guidance note to support workplaces eliminating ETS was also released⁴.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Under the *Occupational Health, Safety & Welfare Act, 1986* (OHSW Act) employers are required to take all measures that are practicable to protect the health and safety of workers and others in the workplace. This entails employers identifying potential hazards, assessing the risks and taking steps to eliminate or control them.

The 2004 amendments to the Tobacco Products Regulation Act, 1997 have introduced total smoking bans in all enclosed workplaces, except licensed hospitality venues. Licensed hospitality venues will have phased in smoking restrictions until they become totally smoke free at the end of October 2007.

Workplace Services and the Tobacco Control Unit, Department of Health are working cooperatively to address smoking issues in the workplace.

RISK CONTROL MEASURES

Prohibition of smoking in the enclosed workplace will ensure that no one in the workplace is exposed to environmental tobacco smoke.

The following measures are essential to the success of achieving a smoke-free working environment.

Commitment

Senior Management must demonstrate commitment and support to the program.

Consultation

During the development and implementation of a smoke-free workplace program, there must be consultation between employers, workers and health and safety representatives.

Policy

Following consultation, a written non-smoking policy should be developed and communicated. The policy should ban smoking from the workplace and include all indoor areas, vehicles and areas where smoke could drift into workplaces.

Support

Designated outdoor areas where smoking is permitted should be established wherever possible. These areas should have adequate natural ventilation and must be placed where there is no risk of smoke drifting into smoke free areas.

There should be no stigmatization of workers who smoke. Encouragement may be offered to smokers to quit smoking.

This can be achieved by:

- health and 'Quit' information placed in strategic locations, e.g. lunch rooms
- ensuring there is no sale of cigarettes at the workplace
- inviting providers of 'Quit' programs to the workplace to talk with employees looking to 'quit'
- offering smokers incentives to participate in 'Quit' programs such as subsidising nicotine replacement therapy (patches etc).
- referring people to the Quitline 131 848 for individual help with quitting

Support and acceptance of smoke-free working environments is increasing every day, even by smokers themselves. A large variety of information is now available to assist workplaces to achieve healthier working environments. Organisations such as Quit SA, located at Cancer Council offer helpful information (ph: 821 4282).

Model policies for a smoke-free workplace are provided in the NOHSC Guidance note available at:

[www.nohsc.gov.au/PDF/Standards/GuidanceNotes/GN-NOHSC3019\(2003\).pdf](http://www.nohsc.gov.au/PDF/Standards/GuidanceNotes/GN-NOHSC3019(2003).pdf)

and

Your Smoke-free Workplace booklet

available at: www.tobaccolaws.sa.gov.au

References:

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) (2003). *Statistics on Drug Use in Australia 2002*. AIHW cat no. PHE 43, Canberra:AIHW (Drug Statistics Series No. 12). <http://www.aihw.gov.au/publications/phe/sdua02/sdua02.pdf>
- 2./3. WHO Regional Office for Europe (2000). *Air quality guidelines for Europe*, (2nd ed). WHO Regional Publications, European Series, No. 91, Copenhagen. <http://www.euro.who.int/document/e71922.pdf>
4. National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (NOHSC) (2003). *Guidance note on the elimination of environmental tobacco smoke in the workplace* [NOHSC:3019(2003)]. [http://www.nohsc.gov.au/PDF/Standards/GuidanceNotes/GN-OHSC3019\(2003\).pdf](http://www.nohsc.gov.au/PDF/Standards/GuidanceNotes/GN-OHSC3019(2003).pdf)

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information may be obtained from

Tobacco Control Unit

Department of Health
PO Box 287, Rundle Mall
ADELAIDE 5000
Ph: 1300 363 703 (local call)
www.tobaccolaws.sa.gov.au

Workplace Services

Department for Administrative and Information Services
GPO Box 465 ADELAIDE SA 5001
Ph: 1300 365 255 (If calling from a mobile phone or from interstate ph: (08) 8303 0400)
Website: www.eric.sa.gov.au

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