

Enjoy a Smoke-free Environment Protect the Health of You and Me



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控煙 14 Tobacco Control Bulletin 專訊

Issue No.

14

專訊



衛生署控煙辦公室
Tobacco Control Office
Department of Health



World No Smoking Day 2007: Smoke-free Environments

The newly amended Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance took effect on 1 January 2007; the new amendment has extended the statutory no smoking areas to most of the public indoor areas and some of the public outdoor areas. This amendment not only protects the public from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke, but also makes Hong Kong meet the regulations stipulated in the World Health Organization Framework Convention of Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC).

Smoking Cessation Hotline **1833183**

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World No Smoking Day Poster: Smoke-free Environments

Many countries and cities, including Hong Kong, have enacted legislations on indoor smoking ban. In order to encourage other countries and regions which have not yet done so to follow suit, the World Health Organization designates the theme of this year's "World No Tobacco Day" (31 May) as "Smoke-free Environments" to promote the early implementation of indoor smoking ban.

Secondhand Smoke is Dangerous- No Doubt on it 100% Smoke-free Environments - Protect Our Health !

The World Health Organization reiterates that secondhand smoke contains over 4,000 kinds of chemicals and over 50 of them are carcinogenic, which can cause cancers, heart diseases, and other serious respiratory diseases or even death. In the past three years, the World Health Organization International Agency For Research on Cancer (2004), the California Environmental Protection Agency in United States (2005) and the United States Department of Health and Human Services (2006) have conducted comprehensive analysis of the researches on secondhand smoke. They all clearly confirm the serious health hazards of secondhand smoke.

The Hard Facts of Secondhand Smoke

- Fact 1:** Secondhand Smoke contains at least 250 kinds of carcinogenic or toxic chemicals; including acetaldehyde, acrolein, formaldehyde, etc. When inhaled, these toxins will spread throughout the body, leading to serious diseases.
- Fact 2:** People most commonly exposed to secondhand smoke in three places namely: workplaces, public indoor areas and homes.
- Fact 3:** Secondhand smoke has been classified as known human carcinogen; it can cause acute and chronic heart diseases, bronchitis, pneumonia and asthma; lower respiratory tract infections, asthma, middle ear infection, sudden infant death syndrome; and low birth-weight for babies of women exposed to secondhand smoke during pregnancy.

(Source: World Health Organization)

Although the tobacco industry has suggested replacing total smoking ban with different kinds of ventilation and filtration systems, researches have proven that these systems cannot reduce or eliminate the harmful effects of secondhand smoke on human health. Therefore, a **100% smoke-free environment is the only solution to protect us from exposing to secondhand smoke and safeguard our health.** In fact, creating a 100% smoke-free environment also provides smokers with a favourable "quit-smoking environment", effectively prevents teenagers from picking up smoking, and let the public truly enjoy the right of breathing fresh-clean-air!

Areas included under the newly amended Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance

To protect the public from harmful effects of secondhand smoke, the newly amended Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance has extended the statutory no smoking areas to cover most of the indoor public areas and some of the outdoor public areas. The newly designated no smoking areas are as follows:

Indoor Places

- Indoor workplaces (including any part for working, taking meal or other purpose)
- Indoor areas in restaurants and karaoke establishments
- Indoor areas in shops
- Indoor areas in markets
- Indoor public areas



Indoor workplaces



Indoor areas in karaoke establishments



Indoor areas in restaurants



Indoor areas in shops



Indoor areas in market



Indoor public areas

Indoor and Outdoor Places

- Escalators
- Public pleasure grounds (including sports ground, sports centres, sitting-out areas and children's playgrounds under management of Leisure and Culture Services Department)
- Public swimming pools, bathing beaches
- Hong Kong Stadium and Mong Kok Stadium
- Child care centers, schools, universities and post secondary colleges
- The Hong Kong Wetland Park
- Hospitals



Escalators



Public pleasure grounds



Public swimming pools



Bathing Beaches



Hong Kong Stadium



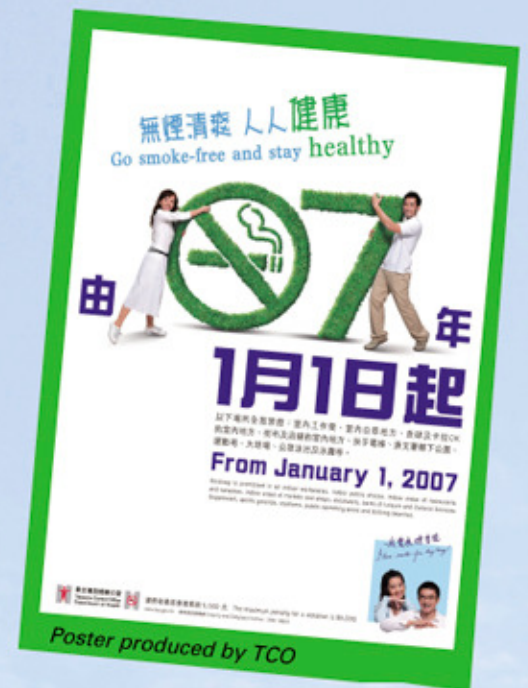
Universities and post secondary colleges



The Hong Kong Wetland Park



Hospitals



Poster produced by TCO

- No person shall smoke or carry a lighted cigarette, cigar or pipe in the statutory no smoking areas. Offenders are liable to a maximum fine of \$5,000. In addition, the manager of a no smoking area may request the offender to extinguish the lighted tobacco product or to leave the no smoking area. Otherwise, the manager may request him to produce documentary proof of identity and provide his name and address.

Tips for No Smoking Venue Managers

- Posting "No Smoking" signs or posters at conspicuous places
 - DO NOT provide ashtrays
 - DO NOT provide smoking area or smoking room in indoor no smoking area
 - If there is any offender, the manager should politely point out that the venue is a no smoking area and then request the offender to extinguish the lighted cigarette or leave the area
 - If there is frequent offences in the no smoking area, the manager may report it to the Tobacco Control Office
- With effect from 1 January 2007, all indoor areas of bars for people 18 year and above, bathhouses, night clubs, massage establishments, mahjong rooms in clubhouses and mahjong-tin kau premises are designated as no smoking areas. However, those establishments which comply with the requirements set out in the Ordinance can be listed as a qualified establishment by the Director of Health and defer the smoking ban until 30 June 2009. The comprehensive smoking ban will apply to ALL establishments with effect from 1 July 2009.
 - Apart from extending the statutory no smoking areas, the new amendments also cover the packaging, advertisement and promotion of tobacco products as well as the enforcement of the Ordinance. Besides, Tobacco Control Inspectors of the Tobacco Control Office of Department of Health are conferred with powers by the Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food to take legal action against those who are in breach of the provisions of the Ordinance. (Please see Schedule 1)

Table 1 Part of the Contents of the newly amended Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance

Packaging of Tobacco Products

- Requires that the health warnings on packets/ containers of tobacco products shall come with pictorial or graphic contents and the prescribed area of such health warnings shall be increased to at least 50% of the principal display surfaces of the packet or container of tobacco products (this requirement shall be met by 27 October 2007 the latest)
- The imposition of a general ban on misleading descriptors used on all tobacco products packaging (this requirement shall be met by 27 October 2007 the latest)

Advertisement and Promotion of Tobacco Products

- Revoking the exemption of retail outlets with two employees or less from prohibition of displaying tobacco advertisement. (with effect from 1 November 2007)
- Revoking the exemption of licensed hawker stalls from prohibition of displaying tobacco advertisement (with effect from 1 November 2009)
- New requirements on the price boards and price markers of tobacco products in retail outlets
- No tobacco products shall be sold together with any other merchandise as a single item
- Further restricting the use of the brand names of tobacco products in non-tobacco product advertisements and any sponsored activities.

Law Enforcement

- Powers have been conferred upon Tobacco Control Inspectors of the Tobacco Control Office of Department of Health to take legal action against those who are in breach of the Ordinance
- Increasing the penalty for offences related to advertising tobacco products and displaying tobacco advertisements from the 4th level (\$25, 000) to the 5th level (\$50,000)

Role of The Tobacco Control Office

After the enactment of the new amendment, the Tobacco Control Office of Department of Health has also taken up enforcement duties apart from the promotion and publicity of tobacco control issues. Tobacco Control Inspectors will inspect at different no smoking areas. They will also follow up and handle each complaint lodged by the public on offences against the Ordinance.

In order to let the public have a better and clearer understanding on the newly designated statutory no smoking areas; the Tobacco Control Office has organized various publicity and education activities since last year such as, broadcasting TV and radio announcements as well as displaying large posters on outdoor advertising platforms and public transports. On the education and assistance rendered for the venue managers, the Tobacco Control Office has held many large-scale seminars explaining to them in details about the requirements of the new legislation, their rights and obligations, as well as providing them with "no smoking" signs, posters and implementation guidelines.

According to the World Health Organization and the data of many countries, the implementation of smoke-free indoor workplaces and public places can motivate smokers to quit smoking and provides them with a favourable smoking cessation environment. Therefore, the Department of Health is also strengthening the promotion on smoking cessation whilst publicizing the new legislation such as visiting private institutions and explaining the advantages and importance of quitting-smoking as well as introducing smoking cessation services to the staff who smoke. To encourage more health care workers to assist the smokers to quit smoking in the community, Department of Health has already distributed "Smoking Cessation Information Kit" to all doctors, dentists and pharmacists to facilitate them to provide smoking cessation counselling for those in need.



Press conference of the Department of Health



Poster display in outdoor platforms



Operation by the Tobacco Control Inspector of TCO



Announcement in Public Interest



Poster display in public transport



Table 2 Services and Resources Provided by Tobacco Control Office

Tobacco Control Legislation

- Handling enquiries and complaints on offences related to tobacco control legislation
- Applying to be listed or removed from the list of qualified establishment

Publicity and Education

- Providing different kinds of "no smoking" signs and posters
- Organizing seminars for venue managers on tobacco control legislation



Providing different kinds of "no smoking" signs

Smoking Cessation

- Smoking Cessation Hotline 1833 183
- Organizing smoking cessation seminars at various institutions



Organizing smoking cessation seminars at various institutions



Smoking Cessation Hotline

Contact Us

- Enquiry Hotline: 2961 8823
- Smoking Cessation Hotline: 1833 183
- Website: www.tco.gov.hk

Let's Create a Smoke-free Hong Kong

As the new tobacco control legislation is enacted, our task of tobacco control in Hong Kong has entered a new phase. The success of implementation of smoke-free policy not only relies on the effort of the government and tobacco control organizations, but also the active participation and positive support of the public. We couldn't have made it without you! So, if you are a smoker, remember not to smoke in the no smoking areas or better yet – quit smoking. If you are a non-smoker, apart from motivating your friends to quit smoking, you may as well appreciate and support their self-disciplined attitude.

Let's carry on and create a smoke-free Hong Kong!





Kicking the Smoking Habit

The Fresh & Healthy Wong Lung-Tak

Being a professional with a perfect family, he has a successful career and works all the way like a never ebbing tide. He is a prestigious man, who lives his life with gusto and makes profound contributions to the society. He once turned a blind eye to the health hazards of smoking and thought that he had already been responsible for his life. But what has motivated him to quit smoking after being a smoker for all these years, and even made him actively participate in and advocate quit-smoking activities ever since he has quit smoking?

The guest of our interview-- Dr Wong Lung-Tak, JP, who had smoked for over 30 years; and after quitting smoking, he founded a volunteer organization known as "Quit Winner Club" for smokers who wished to quit smoking. The following is the excerpt of this interview.



Dr Wong Lung-Tak

W : Dr Wong Lung-Tak

T : Staff of Tobacco Control Office

T : Dr Wong, can you tell us your experience in smoking?

W : I started smoking at the age of 15 for fun under peer influence. During my 30 years of smoking, I once turned a blind eye to the health hazards of smoking and smoked as many as 60 cigarettes a day. Though I had tried to quit smoking many times, I just couldn't resist the temptation of my friends' offer and, sometimes, my own emotional 'roller-coaster' rides prevailed. So I eventually failed. (I tried to quit smoking especially for my better half and family, however she didn't really appreciate what I was doing. We had arguments on many occasions because of trivial matters, which caused my moodiness). It wasn't until 1 April 1995 that I finally succeeded in getting rid of the habit of smoking.

T : What made you quit smoking successfully in 1995? How did you make it at that time?

W : I remember I heard about a quit-smoking programme over the radio by coincidence that year. So I joined a "Quit-smoking Camp" which was held by a volunteer organization. There were some "Quit-smoking Volunteers" in the camp who explained about smoking and health together with information about quitting smoking. With my perseverance and persistence, I started a smoke-free living.

If you ask me: is it hard to quit smoking? I think it was difficult but at the same time it was just a piece of cake. The hard part stemmed from the withdrawal symptoms, for instance, running nose, tears, headaches, etc. Very often, I felt uneasy and really wanted to have a puff in the afternoon; but things did improve a lot in 4 to 5 days and I felt better and better day after day.

T : Having quit smoking for a decade or so, has there been any time that you struggled with yourself or "slip-over"?

W : During the first year, the urge to smoke always struck me, and I would smoke a cigar once in a while; but deep down I actually resisted it and found it obnoxious. I examined myself and recognized that I quit smoking for nobody's sake but my own choice; I should be responsible for myself and adhered to this pledge. Besides, ever since joining the "Quit-smoking Camp", the "Quit-smoking Volunteers" always called in, encouraged me, and patiently gave me their support. I simply couldn't let them down. Then I began to reflect that substantial resources had been spent on teenagers in the society, and yet, sadly, these resources had all gone astray because of the harmful effects of smoking. Not only would smoking cost huge medical expenses, it would also generate numerous family, relationship, and financial problems, etc. I felt that such selfish behaviour should not be encouraged indeed.

Later, I founded the "Quit Winner Club", and gathered a group of ex-smokers as well as friends in the medical and other professions to advocate "quit-smoking".

T : How do you feel after quitting smoking? Any messages you would like to convey to the smokers?

W : My health has improved a great deal after quitting smoking. The frequency of catching a cold, flu and sore throat has dropped significantly. My exercise performance and resilience is even better than when I was in my 20's. In the past when I smoked, my two sons found me "stinky", and they just wouldn't let me come close to them. Now, our relationship has improved considerably. Besides, I save the money that I would otherwise spend on cigarettes, and put it on quit-smoking activities, hoping that more people can realize the benefits of quitting smoking, just like me.

Smoking would do you no good. Hope that more people can quit smoking for themselves, their families and the society. Let's build a smoke-free Hong Kong!



WORDS FROM EDITOR



Smoking (Public Health) (Amendment) Ordinance 2006 has been effective since 1 January 2007. We would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt thanks to all of you for your continuing support in tobacco control for all these years, resulting in the smooth enactment of the Ordinance.

Coincidentally, "Smoke-free Environments" is the theme of the World No Tobacco Day this year. That's why we are especially introducing the importance of a smoke-free environment and the newly amended tobacco control legislation in this issue of Tobacco Control Bulletin. The Smokfree Fun World will also let you have a go at testing your knowledge on the new no smoking areas.

Moreover, through the feature story of Kicking the Habit, we hope that whilst you spend time to get to know the new legislation, you may also seriously consider the idea of "quitting smoking" and make a "Fresh and Healthy Start"!

The newly amended Smoking (Public Health) Ordinance has already designated most of the public indoor areas as no smoking areas while some of the public outdoor areas are designated as no smoking areas as well. **This issue of Smoke-free Fun World is going to test and see whether the readers can tell the following indoor/outdoor areas are no smoking areas or not.**

Please pick the correct answers from the following 10 no smoking areas and put a ✓ next to each answer. Please fax the answer together with your name, address and contact telephone number to 2575 8944 or mail it to Tobacco Control Office, 18th & 25th Floor, Wu Chung House, 213 Queen's Road East on or before 31 August 2007. **Readers who get a 10/10 will be awarded with a souvenir***. All are welcome and let's have fun!

*while stock lasts

Places	No smoking areas	
e.g. Kindergartens	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> outdoor
Workplaces	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor
<hr/>		
1. Universities	<input type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor
2. Parks managed by Leisure and Culture Services Department	<input type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor
3. Beaches managed by Leisure and Culture Services Department	<input type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor
4. Escalators	<input type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor
5. The Hong Kong Wetland Park	<input type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor
6. Mong Kok Stadium	<input type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor
7. Hospitals	<input type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor
8. Markets	<input type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor
9. Secondary schools	<input type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor
10. Shopping malls	<input type="checkbox"/> indoor	<input type="checkbox"/> outdoor

Name: _____ Tel: _____

Address: _____