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RECENT STUDY REVEALS UNSAFE AIR INSIDE ST. LOUIS CITY BARS THAT ALLOW SMOKING

TESTING PROVES NEED FOR SMOKE-FREE POLICY TO PROTECT WORKERS AND PATRONS FROM SECONDHAND SMOKE EXPOSURE

St. Louis – A study by the Roswell Park Cancer Institute, "*St. Louis City Bars Air Monitoring Study*", finds unhealthy air quality in bars that allow smoking in St. Louis City. According to the study, released by Smoke-Free St. Louis City, bars in the City that allow smoking had indoor air pollution levels 6 times higher than smoke-free bars.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Air Quality Index are standards in place to protect public health from air pollution. Testing inside a sampling of St. Louis City bars revealed the air inside was on average "unhealthy" or a "red day" according to the EPA standards, with some places reaching the "hazardous" level. The EPA "hazardous" level is rarely reached outdoors except in the case of a large forest fire or volcanic eruption.

Workers in St. Louis City bars that allow smoking are exposed to levels of air pollution in excess of EPA standards in place to protect public health. A comprehensive smoke-free air policy that prohibits smoking in all indoor places is the only proven means to eliminate exposure to toxic tobacco smoke pollution. This reduction in exposure to toxic tobacco smoke will result in improved quality of life and health outcomes for St. Louis City workers and residents.

The study was conducted to assess indoor air quality in 8 randomly selected St. Louis City, MO bars where indoor smoking is permitted in July 2008. Two similar establishments were also randomly selected and sampled in St. Louis City where indoor smoking is prohibited. The concentration of fine particle air pollution, PM_{2.5}, was measured with a TSI SidePak AM510 Personal Aerosol Monitor. PM_{2.5} is particulate matter in the air smaller than 2.5 microns in diameter. The average particle size of tobacco smoke is 0.2 microns. Particles of this size are released in significant amounts from burning cigarettes, are easily inhaled deep into the lungs, and cause a variety of adverse health effects including cardiovascular and respiratory disease and death.

While this study did not specifically evaluate any ventilation or filtration systems in the sampled venues, two of the locations sampled had filtration systems installed according to a filtration company website. Marketing materials for the installed filtration devices claim they will clean the air of tobacco smoke. The two venues in question, numbers 5 and 6 in this report, had fine particle concentrations over 10 times higher than outdoor air and the air was "unhealthy" according to EPA standards. This confirms what the U.S. Surgeon General has stated, "cleaning the air and ventilating buildings cannot eliminate exposures of nonsmokers to secondhand smoke."

Key findings of the study include:

- The average level of fine particle indoor air pollution was 6 times higher in places in St. Louis City that allow smoking compared to the smoke-free places. (Mean PM_{2.5} concentration in St. Louis City smoking venues 137 µg/m³ versus 22 µg/m³ in smoke-free venues)
- Employees working full-time in the establishments sampled in St. Louis City are exposed annually to fine particle air pollution levels 2.7 times higher than the safe annual limit established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Indoor particle pollution levels in smoke-free St. Louis City bars are low and virtually the same as outdoor air.

In 2006, the U.S. Surgeon General released a landmark report on secondhand smoke. The report confirmed that exposure to secondhand smoke causes cancer, heart disease and serious lung ailments. Secondhand smoke contains dozens of carcinogens and more than 4,000 chemicals, including formaldehyde, cyanide, carbon monoxide and arsenic. As the Surgeon General put it, "The debate is over. The science is clear. Secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance but a serious health hazard."

Consistent with the findings of the U.S. Surgeon General and the American Society for Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers, this study provides further evidence that indoor smoking causes exposure to harmful levels of indoor air pollution. Comprehensive smoke-free air policies prohibiting indoor smoking are the only effective means to eliminate the health risks from secondhand smoke exposure.

The study was authored by Mark Travers, a Research Scientist in the Department of Health Behavior at the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, New York. He has conducted numerous studies on indoor air pollution in the United States and over 40 other countries. Roswell Park Cancer Institute is the nation's first cancer research, treatment and education center and is a member of the prestigious National Comprehensive Cancer Network, an alliance of the nation's leading cancer centers.

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Smoke-Free St. Louis City is a broad-based coalition of residents, organizations, and businesses dedicated to raising awareness of the dangers of secondhand smoke and the need for a smoke-free St. Louis City.

Supporters: American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Institute for Family Medicine, LGBT Community Center of Metropolitan St. Louis, La Clinica, Hispanic Health Center, Lane Tabernacle CME Church, Maternal Child & Family Health Coalition, Missouri Public Interest Research Group, National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse – St. Louis Area, Pentecostal Saints Tabernacle, Saint Louis University Cancer Center, Saint Louis University Community and Family Medicine, St. Louis Diabetes Coalition, St. Louis Suburban School Nurses' Association, Program for the Elimination of Cancer Disparities (PECaD) at Siteman Cancer Center, St. Louis Regional Asthma Consortium, Tobacco-Free Missouri, Greater St. Louis Coalition, Williams and Associates, Inc.

Supportive City Businesses: 6 North Coffee Company, Agave Mexican Table & Tequileria, Atomic Cowboy, Bellon's Market, Christian Science Reading Room Jointly Maintained, Golden Grocer, Java Plus, Masterpiece BBQ, Tienda Centro Americana, The Church Key, The Gramophone

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