

CLEARING THE AIR ABOUT BRANTFORD'S CLEAN AIR BYLAW

Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) – General Fact Sheet

What Is ETS? (Second-Hand Smoke)

The smoke from a cigarette is not just inhaled by the smoker; non-smokers are affected too. ETS is a combination of poisonous gases, liquids, and breathable particles that are harmful to our health – 2/3 of the smoke from a burning cigarette is not inhaled by the smoker, but enters into the surrounding environment.¹ ETS actually contains more dangerous substances than inhaled smoke: it has twice as much nicotine and tar, and five times as much carbon monoxide as the smoke that smokers inhale.¹

Why Do I Need To Be Concerned?

ETS contains over 4,000 chemicals and more than 50 cancer-causing agents.² ETS causes many of the same health problems in non-smokers that are suffered by smokers, including lung cancer and heart disease.^{2,5} The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has officially labelled second-hand smoke as a “Class A” cancer causing substance - the most dangerous of cancer causing agents.¹ ETS causes acute irritation of the eyes, throat, nose and respiratory system. It also causes headaches, nausea and dizziness.⁴ Up to ¼ of the population have existing heart, lung, or allergic conditions that can be aggravated by tobacco smoke.⁴ ETS can adversely affect the fetus of a pregnant woman in the same manner as if the expectant mother smoked during pregnancy.⁴

How Much Exposure To ETS Is Safe?

ETS is harmful to all those exposed to it – adults, children, smokers and non-smokers alike. ETS is one of Canada's major public health hazards.⁴ Even short periods of exposure to ETS result in measurable amounts of toxic substances in the blood, urine, saliva and breastmilk of non-smokers.⁴ A non-smoker in a smoky room, such as a bar, inhales the equivalent of 35 cigarettes an hour.¹

There is no known safe level of exposure to ETS¹

What Are The Solutions?

The regulation of tobacco use to prohibit exposure to ETS in public places, and the development of effective smoke-free policies at work, which prevent exposure to ETS⁴

Why A Smoke-Free Bylaw?

Smoke-free bylaws are designed for a single purpose: to protect non-smokers from the known hazards of second-hand smoke. This issue goes beyond a simple matter of individual choice. Exposure to second-hand smoke is a question of public health.³

There is only one way to eliminate ETS from indoor air – remove the source.¹

For further information, call the Tobacco Information Line 732-6222



Working Today...
For a Healthy Tomorrow

Council for a Tobacco Free Brant
Brant County Health Unit
working with
The City of Brantford

CTFB
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¹Health Canada: “Living Smoke-Free” from www.hc-sc.gc.ca (2001).

²The Lung Association: “Lungs Are For Life” revised version, 2000.

³OTS Media Network: “Second-Hand Smoke: Health Effects”, 2000.

⁴Heart and Stroke Foundation: ETS: Behind the Smoke Screen.

⁵Heart and Stroke Foundation: Smoking in the Workplace: A Long-Term Liability.