

Highlights of the City of Moorhead, Minnesota, 2005 Follow-up Tobacco Study

Study Design: A random telephone sample of 360 households was conducted in Moorhead, Minnesota, in June of 2005. A simple random sampling design was used to ensure a representative sample of residents within the city with an error rate below 5%. Interviews were conducted with household members 18 years of age and older. The nonresponse rate was 17%.

Purpose of the Study: The key objective of the study was to assess residents' views concerning the smoke-free workplace ordinance that took effect in Moorhead in December of 2004, which prohibits smoking in all indoor workplaces, including offices and restaurants, but excludes bars.

Key Findings:

1. General views regarding secondhand smoke policy

The vast majority of residents feel that the new smoke-free workplace ordinance is good public policy and that it reduces people's exposure to secondhand smoke.

- ▶ 85% said the ordinance is good public policy.
- ▶ 51% indicated that secondhand smoke bothers them "a lot" with an additional 20% saying "a fair amount."
- ▶ 67% perceived secondhand smoke to be a "serious health hazard."
- ▶ 86% believed the ordinance will reduce residents' exposure to secondhand smoke.

2. General knowledge of the smoke-free workplace ordinance

Residents' understanding of the smoke-free workplace ordinance is mixed.

- ▶ 85% correctly indicated that smoking is not allowed in restaurants that do not serve alcohol. However, only 53% thought that it was prohibited in restaurants that serve alcohol.
- ▶ 74% correctly indicated that smoking is allowed in bars or cocktail lounges. However, only 58% thought that smoking is allowed in outdoor patio areas of restaurants and bars.
- ▶ 88% correctly stated that smoking is prohibited in offices while only 44% indicated that it was prohibited in bowling alleys.

3. Views regarding the smoke-free workplace ordinance

Residents overwhelmingly favor the current smoke-free workplace ordinance and support has grown.

- ▶ 82% favored the current ordinance with 38% saying they "strongly favor" it.
- ▶ Prior to the ordinance going into effect, only 63% of the residents indicated they favored the ordinance with only 23% saying they "strongly favor" it.

Many residents feel the restrictions within the ordinance are adequate. Some residents favor stronger restrictions.

- ▶ 58% said the restrictions are "just right" while 26% indicate they need to be more restrictive.
- ▶ 51% indicated that bars should not be exempt from the ordinance.

Residents are in strong agreement about the importance of a smoke-free work environment.

- ▶ The vast majority of respondents (98%) said it is important that workers have a

- smoke-free work environment. More than eight in 10 respondents said it is “very important” (84%).
- ▶ 66% indicated work environments have improved as a result of the ordinance.

4. Behavioral changes as a result of the smoke-free workplace ordinance

Although the ordinance has not changed how often the vast majority of residents frequent restaurants that do and do not serve alcohol, it has created a more enjoyable environment for them. For those who did change their behavior, the ordinance tended to increase residents’ likelihood to visit facilities as a result of them being smoke-free.

- ▶ In non-alcohol serving restaurants: 74% visited them about the same amount of time while 19% increased their visits; 68% said their eating at these restaurants since they went smoke-free was more enjoyable.
- ▶ In alcohol serving restaurants: 78% visited them about the same amount of time while 17% increased their visits; 65% said their eating at these restaurants since they went smoke-free was more enjoyable.
- ▶ In bars/lounges (which do allow smoking): 38% of residents said they never visit bars or lounges. Among residents that said they do visit, 81% visited them about the same amount of time while 5% increased their visits. Almost 14% of residents said they visit bars/lounges less often.

5. Perceived economic consequences of the smoke-free workplace ordinance

Most residents feel it is either too early to adequately understand the economic consequences of the smoke-free workplace ordinance or that it will have no significant impact on businesses.

- ▶ In non-alcohol serving restaurants: 39% thought it was too early to tell the economic consequence of the ordinance while 23% felt there was no economic consequence. In contrast, 16% felt the ordinance improved business while 15% thought it hurt it.
- ▶ In alcohol serving restaurants: 45% thought it was too early to tell the economic consequence of the ordinance while 19% felt there was no economic consequence. In contrast, 10% felt the ordinance improved business while 21% thought it hurt it.
- ▶ In bars/lounges (which do allow smoking): 39% thought it was too early to tell the economic consequence of the ordinance on establishments exempted from the ordinance, while 26% felt there was no economic consequence. In contrast, 11% felt the ordinance improved business while 16% thought it hurt it.

6. Demographics of respondents

- ▶ 66% were female
 - ▶ 19% were under age 35 while 21% were older than 65
 - ▶ 43% had a college degree
 - ▶ 56% worked full-time
 - ▶ 9% smoked or used tobacco on a regular basis and an additional 6% were occasional users. Another 32% were former tobacco users while 53% had never used tobacco products.
 - ▶ Of the tobacco users, 35% said the ordinance has caused them to consider stopping or reducing their tobacco use.
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