

# Briefing Points

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## Highlights of the 2005 Secondhand Smoke Survey for Central and Western Minnesota

Including the Minnesota counties of Clay, Douglas, Grant, Otter Tail, Pope, Stevens, Traverse, and Wilkin

April 2005

**Study Design:** A random telephone sample of 601 households was surveyed in an 8-county region of Minnesota in February of 2005. A stratified sampling design was used to ensure a representative sample of residents within the region with an error rate below 4%. The sample also was designed to allow for county-specific analysis, however, the error rate at the county level was much larger (10%) because of budget constraints. Interviews were conducted with household members 18 years of age and older. The nonresponse rate was 17%.

**Purpose of the Study:** Key objectives of the study were to a) assess residents' attitudes and perceptions of secondhand smoke and its consequences, and b) help inform public policy.

### Key Findings:

#### 1. General issues regarding the county in which they reside

- ▶ 79% of residents agree that the economic health of their community is good.
- ▶ 80% of residents agree that they generally support the decisions being made by county leaders.
- ▶ 63% of residents agree people in their county seem resistant to change.

#### 2. Smoking and secondhand smoke issues

- ▶ Residents say that the issues regarding smoking and secondhand smoke are getting attention in their county but more attention is needed.
  - ▶ 43% say "just the right amount of attention" is given to secondhand smoke
  - ▶ 38% say "not enough attention" is given to secondhand smoke
- ▶ Residents indicate they are informed about the issues of secondhand smoke.
  - ▶ 32% are "very informed"
  - ▶ less than 4% were "not at all informed"
- ▶ Residents are very aware of the negative consequences of secondhand smoke and largely favor restrictive policies pertaining to secondhand smoke.
  - ▶ 62% agree that getting rid of smoking in public places does not discriminate against smokers
  - ▶ 93% agree that people should be protected from secondhand smoke
  - ▶ 89% agree that restaurant employees should be able to have a smoke-free workplace
  - ▶ 73% agree that bar employees should be able to have a smoke-free workplace
  - ▶ more than 94% agree that secondhand smoke is harmful to adults and children

#### 3. Preferences for smoke-free locations

- ▶ A significant proportion of residents would use various facilities more often if they were smoke-free. The proportions are as follows:
  - ▶ non-alcohol serving restaurants - 43%
  - ▶ alcohol serving restaurants - 38%
  - ▶ cocktail lounges - 30%
  - ▶ indoor public amusement or recreational facilities - 48%
  - ▶ outdoor public amusement or recreational facilities - 27%

#### **4. Smoking policies in the workplace**

- ▶ 75% of residents prefer to have totally smoke-free indoor work environments, a policy implemented at the workplace of 75% of respondents.
- ▶ 60% of residents prefer to have restrictions to smoking outdoors at their workplace, a policy implemented at the workplace of 51% of respondents.
  - ▶ 31% want smoking not allowed anywhere on company property
  - ▶ 29% want smoking limited to certain distances from entrances

#### **5. Government's role in secondhand smoke policy**

- ▶ 62% of residents agree that it is the responsibility of government to enact ordinances that protect workers and community members from secondhand smoke.
  - ▶ 85% of residents agree that their county should continue to explore the most effective ways of dealing with issues of secondhand smoke.
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