



*To Protect and Promote the Health and the Environment of the People of Kittitas County*

## NEWS RELEASE

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## **Kittitas County Board of Health Approves Smoking in Public Places Policy and Procedures for Enforcement**

Kittitas County Public Health Department has established policy guidelines to enforce Kittitas County Code and state law related to smoking in public places. The law prohibits smoking in public places, places of employment, and a distance of 25 feet from building entrances and exits. Establishments found to be out of compliance with the law at any time will be subject to a series of increasingly stringent penalties.

Establishments will only be subject to penalties through the health department if the violation is witnessed by a Public Health staff member. At the first violation, a fine of \$500 will be given. At a second violation, a second fine of \$500 will be given. With any additional violations the responsible party for the establishment will be referred to the Kittitas County Prosecutor's Office to be charged with a misdemeanor.

Since the Smoking in Public Places state law (RCW 70.160) was enacted in 2005, complaints and violations have continued to decrease. However, violations still occur.

- The intent of the law is to protect the health and welfare of all citizens, including workers in their places of employment.
- The law was enacted in 2005 and since then the rate of bar and restaurant employee exposure to secondhand smoke dropped from 29 percent in 2005 to about 3 percent in 2006.
- The Kittitas County Public Health Department is the enforcing agency. Please call (509) 962-7090 to report a business violation.

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