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Condensed Ventilation Talking Points

This message document can serve as a foundation for educating and communicating around the limits of ventilation to protect nonsmokers from the harms of secondhand smoke and vapor. The messages do not need to be used verbatim and can be adapted based on the type of communication and target audience.

This is an internal document for STEPP grantees only.

Smoke

means the emissions or release of gases, particles, vapors or aerosols into the air from burning, heating or activation of any device, including, but not limited to a cigarette, electronic smoking device, e-cigarette, vape pens, e-hookahs or any other product by any name or descriptor when the apparent or usual purpose of burning, heating or activation of the device is human tasting and inhalation.

The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)** states that “Ventilation does not effectively protect nonsmokers from secondhand smoke.”¹

The only way to fully protect nonsmokers from secondhand marijuana and tobacco smoke/vapor exposure is to completely eliminate smoking and vaping in indoor spaces.

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems can distribute secondhand tobacco and marijuana smoke as well as vape-aerosols throughout a building²

Marijuana smoke contains many of the same cancer-causing chemicals as tobacco smoke.³

¹ “Ventilation Does Not Effectively Protect Nonsmokers from Secondhand Smoke,” Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Accessed on November 5, 2018.

https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/secondhand_smoke/protection/ventilation/index.htm

² U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006. Download at http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/sgr_2006/index.htm.

³ Moir, D., et al., A comparison of mainstream and sidestream marijuana and tobacco cigarette smoke produced under two machine smoking conditions. *Chem Res Toxicol* 21: 494-502. (2008). <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18062674>

Research shows that up to 65 percent of air can be exchanged between units in multi-unit housing settings and that smoke travels through even tiny cracks and crevices, exposing residents in adjacent units.⁴

American Society of Heating Refrigeration and Air-conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) holds the position that the only means of avoiding adverse health effects and eliminating indoor secondhand smoke/vapor exposure is to ban all smoking and vaping activity inside and near buildings. This position is supported by the conclusions of health authorities that any level of secondhand smoke exposure leads to adverse health effects and therefore:

- The building and its systems can only reduce odor and discomfort but cannot eliminate exposure when smoking is allowed inside or near a building.
- Even when all practical means of separation and isolation of smoking areas are employed, adverse health effects from exposure in non-smoking spaces in the same building cannot be eliminated.

Tobacco Industry Tactics

Many of the same arguments utilized by the tobacco industry in the past are now resurfacing as pro-marijuana advocates seek to normalize its use in indoor settings. The ventilation “solution” was created in the early 1980s in order “to defeat mandatory and voluntary smoking restrictions and to slow the decline of the social acceptability of smoking.”⁵

As smoke-free policies became commonplace across the country, tobacco companies developed programs to thwart smokefree efforts, as evidenced by their own statements:

- “Opportunities remain to achieve accommodation in hospitality, workplaces and selected other public places through a combination of: Ally development, Ventilation technologies, Communications programs.”⁶
- “Encourage the introduction and passage of bills and ordinances setting acceptable ventilation standards.”⁷

⁴ Center for Energy and Environment. (2004). Reduction of Environmental Tobacco Smoke Transfer in Minnesota Multifamily Buildings Using Air Sealing and Ventilation Treatments. Retrieved from <https://www.mncee.org/getattachment/Resources/Projects/Secondhand-Smoke-Research/Reduction-of-Environmental-Tobacco-Smoke-Transfer-in-Minnesota-Multifamily-Buildings-Using-Air-Sealing-and-Ventilation-Treatments.pdf.aspx>

⁵ [n.a.], “Conceptual Framework of Comprehensive Public Smoking Program,” Philip Morris, 1989, Bates No: 2022710093-0129. Accessed on October 14, 2004. Download at <https://www.industrydocumentslibrary.ucsf.edu/tobacco/docs/#id=gtdj0120>.

⁶ [n.a.], “Ensuring Reasonable Smoking Policies by Accommodating the Preferences of Smokers and Nonsmokers,” Philip Morris, December 20, 1996, Bates No: 2063913215-3300. Accessed on October 14, 2004. Download at <https://www.industrydocumentslibrary.ucsf.edu/tobacco/docs/#id=zhhm0086>.

⁷ [n.a.], “Conceptual Framework of Comprehensive Public Smoking Program,” Philip Morris, 1989, Bates No: 2022710093-0129. Accessed on October 14, 2004. Download at <https://www.industrydocumentslibrary.ucsf.edu/tobacco/docs/#id=gtdj0120>.

- “Create a model indoor air quality bill to be added to suggested state legislation book published annually. Model bill will focus on ventilation, filters, inspections, etc. Smoking will not be dealt with directly.”⁸
- “Conduct indoor air quality briefings with key lawmakers and existing and potential allies to encourage their support of legislative efforts concerning ventilation standards.”⁹
- “While not shown to address the health effects of secondhand smoke, ventilation can help improve the air quality of an establishment by reducing the sight and smell of smoke and by controlling smoke drift.”¹⁰

⁸ [n.a.], “Indoor Air Quality Alternative Strategy,” Philip Morris, 1989, Bates No: 2025858759. Accessed on October 14, 2004. Download at <https://www.industrydocumentslibrary.ucsf.edu/tobacco/docs/#id=fhxy0127>.

⁹ [n.a.], “Conceptual Framework of Comprehensive Public Smoking Program,” Philip Morris, 1989, Bates No: 2022710093-0129. Accessed on October 14, 2004. Download at <https://www.industrydocumentslibrary.ucsf.edu/tobacco/docs/#id=gtdj0120>.

¹⁰ National Licensed Beverage Association. AtmospherePLUS: How Ventilation Can Improve Customer Comfort and Profitability Brochure). Alexandria, VA: National Licensed Beverage Association, 2000.