

We are all licensed respiratory therapists for the state of Wyoming, and we are members of the state board for the Wyoming Society for Respiratory Care. We care for patients on a daily basis who are suffering the effects smoking has on the human body.

Whether people are exposed to first, second or even third hand smoke the potential of developing lung cancer or heart disease can increase as much as 20% in anyone who is exposed to these chemicals. The Surgeon General of the United States says "Eliminating smoking in indoor spaces is the only way to fully protect nonsmokers from secondhand smoke exposure. Separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating buildings does not eliminate secondhand smoke exposure." Also according to the Secretary of Health and Human Services, tobacco is the leading cause of preventable and premature death, killing an estimated 443,000 Americans each year. Cigarette smoking costs the nation \$96 billion in direct medical costs and \$97 billion in lost productivity annually."

Secondhand smoke is classified as a potential cancer-causing agent by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) According to the American cancer society Nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke at work are at increased risk for adverse health effects. Levels of secondhand smoke in restaurants and bars have been found to be 2 to 5 times higher than in residences with smokers and 2 to 6 times higher than in office workplaces. The National Cancer Institute found that being employed in a workplace where smoking is prohibited is associated with a reduction in the number of cigarettes smoked per day and an increase in the success rate of smokers who are attempting to quit. As well as less sick calls in employees and reduced cost to company insurance plans.

Smoking is detrimental to the health of everyone who is exposed to it, we as respiratory therapists would like to see everyone make the choice to quit using tobacco, but until then we see this smoking ban as a step in the appropriate direction. The Surgeon General in 2006 stated "there is no risk-free level of contact with secondhand smoke; even brief exposure can be harmful to health." All things considered we believe a smoking ban is the right thing to do.

We would like to say thank you for taking the time to consider this ordinance and to make a positive change for Natrona County.

Thank you,

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