

Smoke Free Patios Final Evaluation Report Chula Vista, 2004-2007



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Report Submitted: June 11, 2007

County Contract Number 502181, County of San Diego, Public Health Services, Chronic Disease and Health
Disparities
Prop 99 Activities – Tobacco Control – Project 4, Second Hand Smoke Patio Dining
Institute for Public Strategies

Background- The city of Chula Vista is one of the fastest growing cities in the nation and it is the second largest municipality in San Diego County. Resident population increased over 25% between 2000 and 2005 and commercial and industrial growth is not far behind. Chula Vista has approximately 300 food and beverage establishments; 38% of which have outdoor dining facilities.

Social Norms- Research shows that smoke-free outdoor dining areas are good for business. Surveys by the California Department of Health show that 84.9 percent of San Diego County residents don't smoke, and 72 percent of smokers and 92 percent of non-smokers in California prefer to eat in restaurants that are smoke-free.

Objective- By May 31, 2007, at least two cities in San Diego County will eliminate the threat of second-hand smoke in outdoor dining patios. This is a non-primary objective addressing Communities of Excellence Indicator # 2.2.6.

Rational- The objective and target city was chosen by TCRP and IPS primarily based on community readiness. The Institute for Public Strategies began working in the south bay and realized the readiness of Chula Vista was at a place where the passage of Smoke Free Patios could be accomplished in a couple of years. We know from the environmental prevention work previously accomplished by IPS that policies passed and implemented at the city/county level have a great impact on changing community norms and are sustained over time, particularly with regard to tobacco control.

Overview of interventions- Project activities initially focused on community leaders to gain their support, and city council members as they are the decision makers with the authority to adopt the implementation of smoke free patios. In the first phase of the intervention, a community task force was developed in order to engage community leaders and local residents in addressing smoke free outdoor dining policies. Educational Packets referred to as Action Kits were developed in English and Spanish, these packets were sent to city council and the Mayor's office, as well as community members, and businesses. The packets included information on the benefits of smoke free policies, a model ordinance for the implementation of smoke free outdoor patios ordinance and relevant fact sheets pertaining to harms of exposure to second hand smoke. The primary focus to secure the success of such implementation was determined by the level of community and council support. As a result, the following interventions were applied:

Project Staff conducted a survey to document the number of establishments with outdoor dining patios in the City of Chula Vista.

Project Staff proceeded to present data on public exposure to secondhand smoke and support for the policy to local community leaders, Chula Vista City Manager, City Attorney and Mayor's office. Information on the economic benefits of smoke free patios was also presented. Additional information regarding statewide policies was provided to the Mayor's staff and City Attorney.

In addition, Letters to the editors, Op-ed, and press releases were drafted and submitted to various media outlets to discuss the benefits of smoke free policies and the dangers of exposure to second hand smoke. This was conducted to inform and influence both the community at large and decision makers concerning the benefits of smoke free policies.

In the second phase of the project we increased momentum by enhancing community outreach, and work with elected officials.

After the second phase of intervention the City of Chula Vista adopted and implemented a smoke free outdoor dining policy. In addition, the city subsequently passed a 50 ft smoking ban in all public entryways, as well as smoke free parks. This came as a result of initially presenting the city with a comprehensive model ordinance that also included smoke free parks, and a smoking ban in all public entryways. As a result of the comprehensive tobacco policies that were adopted and implemented by the City of Chula Vista, project staff conducted a news event to publicly acknowledge the city at a city council hearing for their leadership role in tobacco control. Coalition members also held a press conference highlighting San Diego County's Smoke Free Stars, the city of Chula Vista was designated as the leader in Tobacco Control for the county.

Evaluation Design- To evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention and the impact of the policy adoption, the project conducted an empirical survey developed by the Institute for Public Strategies which selected a representative sample of 30 restaurants in Chula Vista with outdoor dining areas. The survey was administered via Telephone. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, and a non-experimental design.

Evaluation Findings-The survey examined the economic impact, overall employee and patron satisfaction, and compliance of the Smoke Free Patios Ordinance. The data shows that smoke free policies are good for business and protects patrons and employees from second hand smoke. Overall satisfaction with the ordinance is high. 88% of staff reported to be satisfied and happy with the implementation of the ordinance. 76% of managers also reported that they would recommend other restaurant owners and cities to implement such smoke free policies. Most importantly, 88% of businesses reported that their business revenue remained the same and even increased since the ordinance was adopted. Businesses weren't the only ones pleased with the ordinance, servers reported that 92% of customers were pleased or satisfaction remained the same since the ordinance went into effect. 88% of businesses surveyed say that business has increased or remained the same since the adoption of the ordinance while only 10% say their business has decreased. With regard to patron satisfaction, 92% of patron's satisfaction has remained the same or increased, while only 7% said their customer satisfaction has decreased. 76% of Chula Vista restaurants would recommend this for other cities across San Diego County. Furthermore, the majority of employees and managers surveyed have reported that they enjoy working in a smoke free environment, 88% in favor of the new ordinance and 7% dislike the ordinance. The percentage of the occupation of those surveyed is the following; 74.4% managers and 14% servers.

Process data was also collected, such as public opinion surveys and key informant interviews.

Conclusion-The objective of getting 1 city to adopt and implement smoke-free patios was met. Moreover, the evaluation shows that overall satisfaction with the impact of smoke free patios was constructive. The interventions applied were successful based on the implementation and support of such interventions.

Lesson Learned from this project and recommendations for future projects includes the following.

- Targeting cities that are interested and show higher level of readiness in adopting the policy can be advantageous to the project. It increases the probability of a positive outcome and is less likely to waste resources.
- Media advocacy was a critical component to the level of public support. Future interventions should continue to use the media to maintain momentum and keep this issue in the public's agenda.
- Evidence of the economic impact on businesses with smoke free patios is limited. Future research showing economic impacts would be beneficial to continue to prove that smoke free patios is in fact good for business.

This project illustrated that City Councils are receptive to adopting and implementing smoke free policies that ban smoking in outdoor dining areas, as well as smoke free parks and entryways. Future work should focus on dispelling any misconception around the economic hardships, patron and employee dissatisfaction. The lessons from this project would be useful in accomplishing this goal.