



WISCONSIN *is* BETTER

SMOKE-FREE

**For Immediate Release**

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## MILWAUKEE'S BARS AND RESTAURANTS GO SMOKE-FREE TODAY

Milwaukee (July 5, 2010)—Beginning today, everyone who goes to work, to dinner or out for a drink in Milwaukee will do so in a smoke-free environment. The *Wisconsin Smoke-Free Act*, which takes effect today, requires all Wisconsin workplaces to be smoke-free, including bars and restaurants.

The law, passed in 2009, was designed to go into effect July 5, 2010 to give restaurants, taverns and their smoking customers a year to adapt to the new law, which will help improve the health of customers and workers.

“This new law is about good public health policy, not whether one likes or dislikes smoking,” said Lisa M. Davidson, American Cancer Society. “The debate has been over for a long time—and the proof is conclusive: there’s no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.”

Today, Milwaukeeans will gather at two popular establishments to celebrate the new law. Each celebration includes a short program (time noted below):

• **Tres Hermanos Club (1332 W. Lincoln Ave.)—pictures best between noon-12:15 p.m.** Speakers during the program include Leonor Rosas, UMOS; Maria Banda, Manager of Tres Hermanos Club; and Emilio Lopez, a local resident.

For more information, call Leonor Rosas at (414) 467-7596.

• **Von Trier Tavern (2235 N. Farwell Ave.)—pictures best between 5:15-5:30 p.m.** Speakers include Rep. Jon Richards, (D-Milwaukee), the lead co-sponsor of the *Wisconsin Smoke-Free Act*; Pastor Lee Shaw, St. Gabriel’s Church of God, Inc.; and David Riemer, Community Advocates Public Policy Institute Director.

For more information call Jason Brame at (414) 477-3940.

### **The Cost of Smoking**

Milwaukee suffers 730 smoking-related deaths each year, a full 15 percent of the city’s deaths overall, according to the 2010 Burden of Tobacco Report recently released by the American Cancer Society and the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

## Smoke-Free / Add One

Tobacco continues to be the single greatest cause of preventable deaths in the state: more than 7,700 die in Wisconsin each year due to tobacco use, and secondhand smoke is estimated to cause about 57 lung cancer deaths, 674 deaths from ischemic heart disease, and seven infant deaths from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Four years ago, the U.S. Surgeon General reported that non-smokers exposed to secondhand smoke at home or work have an increased risk for heart disease and lung cancer. The report recommended that all states enact smoke-free laws. Wisconsin is the 28<sup>th</sup> state to enact a statewide clean indoor air law.

“This is truly a breath of fresh air for the vast majority of people in our community who don’t smoke and especially for those who work in smoke-filled environments,” said Dona Wininsky, American Lung Association. “The prospect of change can seem challenging, but we have yet to see one smoke-free state—or even one smoke-free community—in which these new laws haven’t been wildly popular.”

In fact, she added, a poll taken in Minnesota the year after it enacted its statewide smoke-free law found that the new law was more popular than the state’s professional football team, the Minnesota Vikings.

“We’re confident that, once enacted, we’ll see the same thing,” Wininsky said. “But of course that might depend on how the Packers do this year!”

For more information visit [www.wibettersmokefree.com](http://www.wibettersmokefree.com).