

POLICY NAME

Smoke Free Outdoor Areas

POLICY NUMBER

EH 001

DATE ADOPTED

13 August 2007

COUNCIL MINUTE NUMBER

ORD 289

ECM NUMBER

3854548

POLICY TYPE

Council

REVIEW DATE

Under Review

RESPONSIBLE DEPARTMENT

Environmental Health

RELATED DOCUMENTS

-

Purpose

To provide the basis behind the Council's decision to provide smoke free outdoor areas for the community.

Policy Statement

Penrith City Council is committed to the principle of providing smoke free outdoor areas for the community to enjoy and utilise, consistent with Council vision of providing healthy settings for a Penrith community living in a sustainable city. This commitment is undertaken in acknowledgement of the damaging effects of passive smoking and the impact upon the natural environment of littering of cigarette butts.

Penrith City Council, through working in partnership with the NSW Cancer Council, has adopted this position in response to evidence indicating support from the community for the introduction of such a position. Appropriate signage will be progressively introduced at priority locations in conjunction with an information and education program to raise awareness within the community of the benefits of supporting smoke free outdoor areas.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, councillors, contractors, residents and visitors to the City of Penrith.

POLICY:

Diseases such as cancer, respiratory illness and coronary heart disease can all be attributed to smoking. Tobacco use reduces the quality of life for smokers, and those around them, while also placing a large financial burden on the community. It is expected that reductions in these diseases would occur if there were a decrease in smoking rates. There is substantial evidence linking exposure to second-hand smoke with a range of serious and life threatening health impacts including heart disease, cancer, asthma and other respiratory problems. Infants or children who breathe other people's smoke are also more likely to develop middle ear and chest infections, croup and wheezing. Other conditions associated with passive smoke are pneumonia, bronchiolitis and glue ear (NSW Cancer Council).

Western Sydney continues to report higher rates of smoking, and lower rates of cessation, than NSW overall. The proportion of residents aged over 16 years that smoke in Penrith is 24.7%. This is significantly higher than the NSW average of 21.9%. Data collected by Sydney West Area Health Service and NSW Health identified that illness associated with tobacco usage in Western Sydney amounts to almost \$30 million per year in hospital costs alone.

Cigarettes are the most littered item in the world. Consistently one of the most common items found during Clean Up Australia Day, cigarette butts make up 31% of the top 10 items found and almost 50% of litter in urban areas. Cigarette butts are not biodegradable and take up to 5 years to break down. A policy that restricts smoking in outdoor areas can help to reduce the amount of cigarette butt litter that is left behind in the vicinity of parks and playgrounds.

A survey undertaken in December 2006 of 2,400 NSW residents that found overwhelming support for smoking restrictions in the following areas:

- 92% support bans in children's playgrounds
- 85% support bans outside workplace doors/entrances
- 80% support bans in sports stadiums
- 69% support bans in outdoor eating areas
- In addition, 65% say they avoid places where they may be exposed to other people smoke