

Sign of the times
photo by Chris Frutchie



figured into the equation. With that in mind, each city has attempted to include accommodations for area businesses, such as restaurants and bars, to limit the negative impact the smoking regulations might have on their revenue.

PLANO: OK PLAYING THE “BAD GUY”

In Plano, clean air ordinances have been in effect since 1995. In order to determine their impact on area restaurant sales, an evaluation of quarterly restaurant and retail sales data was performed from 1987 through 1999. According to the Texas State Comptroller’s office, these studies found area restaurant revenues were not negatively impacted by the ordinances.

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“Our entire purpose for the smoking ordinance was to protect the public’s health,” said Brian Collins, Director of Environmental Health for the City of Plano. “These regulations will have the most long-term affect on protecting the public’s health since the chlorination of water. This is a big step in public health protection.” Mr. Collins continued, “After we passed the ordinance, several restaurants contacted us, saying they were glad Plano passed these protective measures. These restaurants wanted to regulate smoking in their facilities, but didn’t want to be the ‘bad guy.’ In fact,” Mr. Collins concluded, “we’ve received

Clearing the Air on Smoking

By Emily Foshee

ONE OF THE GREAT THINGS about living in north Texas is the distinct character each city in the area maintains. But when it comes to protecting its citizens from second-hand smoke, Frisco, McKinney and Plano are all on the same page.

Cities large and small across the country began looking at ways to protect their communities when the Surgeon General of the United States released findings that second-hand smoke breathed by healthy non-smokers may cause as many diseases as it does in those who are inhaling the nicotine first-hand.

In fact, it’s estimated that lung cancer

caused by exposure to second-hand smoke kills more than 3,000 adult non-smokers in the United States each year. Another 46,000 from coronary heart disease and an estimated 430 newborns from sudden infant death syndrome. The ill effects of second hand smoke on the future of infants and children has yet to be fully calculated.

The cities of Frisco, McKinney and Plano have enacted smoking ordinances to ensure the public’s exposure to second-hand smoke is minimized as much as possible. But there is more to consider than physical health. Fiscal health is also

no reports that Plano businesses have suffered financially due to our smoking regulations.” Plano bans smoking:

- in enclosed facilities within places of employment, food establishments, nightclubs and bars, private and semi private rooms of physical and mental health facilities, such as hospitals, clinics, physical therapy offices, and doctor and dentist offices
- in common areas of apartment buildings, condos, trailer parks, retirement facilities, nursing homes and multi-unit residential facilities
- within 25 feet of any door, window or opening to an indoor enclosed area

To review Plano’s smoking ordinance visit their website at www.plano.gov.



City ordinances often leave smokers out in the cold

photo by Chris Frutchie

debate has surrounded the city’s smoking policies.

In Frisco smoking is prohibited in:

- all public and private schools
- elevators, museums, libraries and galleries
- all public transit areas open to the public
- meeting rooms in public service areas managed by Frisco where business is conducted
- buildings or sports arenas used for exhibiting motion pictures, plays, lectures, musical recitals and athletic events, etc.
- public restrooms and lobbies
- establishments such as department stores, restaurants, grocery stores, private clubs, bingo parlors or bowling centers, drug stores, malls and hair salons

MCKINNEY: PHASING OUT SMOKE

The first phase of regulations that ban smoking in many public places in McKinney went into effect January 1, 2008. Starting September 4, 2008, the second phase of the city’s smoking regulation went into effect. It bans lighting up in:

- all McKinney businesses, including retail stores, offices and restaurants
- public transit, museums, theaters, public parks and hospitals
- common-use areas in apartments and other buildings

The rules in McKinney as to where smoking is permitted are similar to codes in the other cities. Smoking is allowed:

- in retail tobacco stores and designated smoking rooms of country clubs and outdoor places of employment
- on public sidewalks at least 25 feet from doors and windows and in parking lots within public parks

- enclosed areas within private clubs may be designated as a smoking room, but, smoking rooms must have a sign at the entrance which says “Smoking Room... Members Only”

“Our focus is on the public’s health,” said McKinney Community Development Director Sam Chavez. “We have had great compliance with the first phase of the ordinance and many establishments voluntarily have been smoke-free for quite a while.”

For more information on McKinney’s smoking ordinance or to download a copy of the “No Smoking” sign, visit www.mckinneytexas.org

FEW COMPLAINTS ACCOMPANY FRISCO’S RULES

Although much has been said about the lengths to which Frisco encourages businesses and citizens to go green, little

Smoking is also prohibited within 20 feet of facilities where smoking is not allowed.

For more information on Frisco’s smoking ordinance, go to www.friscotexas.gov.

COUNTING THE COST

When you consider that taxpayers often end up paying for the care of victims of smoke, second hand or otherwise, the rules on where smokers may and may not light up could be saving a lot of money and thousands of lives.

Plano’s Brian Collins speaks for officials from his sister cities when he says, “With the prevalence of many forms of cancer in our society today, we’re committed to providing our citizens with as healthy an environment as possible.”

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