



Smoke Free Workplace Policy

as at 4 December 2007

POLICY NAME	Smoke Free Workplace Policy
PREVIOUS POLICY	<i>OH&S Policy 039 – Non Smoking Policy</i> adopted 24 August 1993.
RELEVANT LEGISLATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 (NSW)</i> -This Act places a duty of care on all employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees, as well as all onsite visitors including contractors.• <i>Workers Compensation Act 1987 (NSW)</i> - Employees who receive an injury arising out of or in the course of employment may be entitled to compensation under this Act.• <i>Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 (NSW)</i> - Under the Smoke-free Environment Act 2000 all enclosed public places must be smoke-free including community halls.
RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• NSW Health Department Guidelines on Passive Smoking• NSW Cancer Council Guidelines for Local Government

INTRODUCTION

1. Title and Commencement

This policy is titled *Strathfield Council Smoke Free Workplace Policy*, which was adopted by Council resolution on 4 December 2007. It replaces the previous policy titled *OH&S Policy 039 – Non Smoking Policy* that was first adopted on 24 August 1993 and last amended on 28 July 1998.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of the policy is to protect the health of Council employees, contractors and visitors by eliminating exposure to environmental tobacco smoke in and around all Strathfield Council buildings and facilities including vehicles.

3. Objectives and Coverage of the Policy

The objectives of this policy are:

- Specify places where smoking is not permitted in the workplace
- Outline the responsibilities of staff including managers
- Provide programs and assistance for staff wishing to quit smoking
- Promote smoke free workplace policy in recruitment and training for new employees
- Authorise placement of 'No Smoking' signs

This policy applies to all employees, contractors and visitors to Strathfield Council buildings and facilities.

4. Effects of passive smoking

Smoking is known to be a contributory factor in many serious and fatal illnesses such as cancer. However, exposure to smoke (passive smoking) can be equally dangerous to non-smokers, who breathe in other people's smoke (Environmental Tobacco Smoke). Passive smoking can affect smokers and non-smokers.

Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) is a combination of exhaled mainstream smoke (smoke breathed out by the smoker) and sidestream smoke (smoke that drifts from the burning end of a cigarette). Environmental Tobacco Smoke is made up of over 4,000 chemicals and more than 60 of these are known to cause cancer in humans. Research indicates that there is no safe level of exposure to ETS and prolonged exposure is known to increase the risks of lung cancer and heart disease, as well as the incidence of sore throats, nasal symptoms, asthma attacks and other chest illnesses.

The dangers of passive smoking have been extensively documented and since 1986 there have been at least 34 substantive research studies undertaken in Australia and overseas that confirm the impact of ETS on workers and the general public. Since that date the damage caused by ETS exposure in the workplace has been repeatedly affirmed by the major health organisations of Australia, the USA, the UK, and elsewhere.

The effects of passive smoking in the workplace have resulted in litigation, where employers have been held responsible for illnesses caused by passive smoking. (*Source: NSW Department of Health Fact Sheets at www.health.nsw.gov.au*)

POLICY STATEMENT

Strathfield Council has a legal obligation to provide a safe and healthy workplace under legislation such as *Occupational Health & Safety Act 2000*. A workplace can constitute both indoor and outdoor places, including Council motor vehicles.

1. Areas affected by policy

- A smoke free environment must be maintained in all Council buildings, including Council Offices including Council Chambers and Depot, Libraries, Community Centres, Community Halls (including Scout Halls), Community Clubhouses, Golf Courses, all Council vehicles, storage areas, restrooms and toilets, lifts, workshops and lunch rooms.
- To prevent drift of smoke into smoke free environments, no smoking will be permitted within 10 metres of Council premises. There should be no smoking in thoroughfares or access paths eg no person should have to inhale smoke walking in or out of a building or on paths between Council buildings. Every care should be taken to prevent the drift of smoke into workplaces.

2. Programs to assist in quitting smoking

- Strathfield Council will provide assistance to any member of staff who wish to stop smoking by paying costs of an accredited stop smoking program.
- Consideration may be given to providing paid leave to attend an approved course during working hours.

3. Approved Smoking Areas

- Smoking is not permitted within 10 metres of Council premises.
- No smoking signs may be erected near entry to buildings.
- Where possible, staff should not smoke in outdoor areas, which are visible to the public.

4. Recruitment

- Strathfield Council will advertise in all recruitment material, including Council's website, of its smoke free workplace policy.
- All new employees will be informed of the smoke free workplace policy at commencement of employment and at induction training for new staff.

5. Responsibilities

- All staff are responsible for ensuring that Strathfield Council maintains a smoke free environment by complying with the provisions of this policy and reporting any incidents, which breach this policy.
- Staff who fail to consider the safety of others at work by not complying with the non-smoking policy may be personally liable to a fine of up to \$3,300 under Section 20 the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000*.
- In particular, managers and team leaders are responsible for ensuring that all employees under their control fully understand the requirements and provisions of the policy.
- Council's Human Resources Section is responsible for ensuring that this policy is included in induction training for new staff.

6. Environmental Waste Reduction

- Staff are responsible for ensuring that any waste such as cigarette butts are properly disposed.
- Staff are reminded that cigarette butts take five years to break down and make up more than 50% of litter items in NSW, therefore used butts must be properly disposed. Inappropriate disposal can incur fines of up to \$200.

7. Right to vary or revoke

- Strathfield Council reserves the right to vary or revoke this policy at any time in consultation with relevant parties.