



St. Mary's County Health Department

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HEALTH DEPARTMENT OFFERS RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES AND PUBLIC TO GO SMOKE FREE

LEONARDTOWN, MD (January 29, 2008) – As the state implements the Clean Indoor Air Act of 2007, the St. Mary's County Health Department will offer help and provide information for businesses and citizens who have questions or concerns about the new smoke free legislation that goes into effect February 1.

Beginning Friday, St. Mary's citizens can expect that businesses will prohibit smoking in indoor areas open to the public and that 'no smoking signs' will be posted in bars and restaurants. Business owners and the public can learn more about the new law and the regulations that guide the law by accessing a tool kit made available by the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene on the Web at [><](#). They may also get more information by calling a state Help Line (1-866-703-3266). Tool kits will also be available at the health department.

The public can help business comply with the law by refraining from smoking in these establishments, and reporting violations to the Environmental Health Services division of St. Mary's County Health Department. Reports of smoking violations will be investigated within 72 hours of receiving the call. Although the health department is not anticipating a flurry of activity as the new law goes into effect, the

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health department is ready to address any compliance issues, and assist businesses in making the adjustment to smoke-free environments. Results from other cities that have gone smoke free have shown that most businesses are able to comply with little or no difficulty, and that their patrons are very supportive.

Information about how business owners may apply for a waiver to the law, and the waiver application are also available on the Web site and at the health department. The waiver process will begin and end at the St. Mary's County Health Department, and include a state review of the request for waiver.

For more information about Clean Air Maryland, please call the health department at 301-475-4330.

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