

11/12/86

George R. Pettersen, M.D.  
Director of Public Health  
Department of Public Health  
County of San Bernardino  
351 North Mt. View Avenue  
San Bernardino, California 92415-0010

Dear Dr. Pettersen:

You asked me to summarize for your members what we know about the dangers of involuntary, or passive, smoking to nonsmokers.

There is all the medical evidence necessary to support reasonable and sensible protection for the nonsmoker against the irritation and potential harm that comes from other people's smoke.

The harmful constituents of mainstream cigarette smoke are found in sidestream smoke, sometimes to a greater extent than in mainstream smoke.

Pollution from tobacco smoke in homes, offices, other worksites and in certain public places can reach levels which exceed contaminant levels permitted under environmental and occupational health regulations.

Nonsmokers absorb the constituents of tobacco smoke into their bodies, even though in smaller amounts than is true of those who smoke.

Passive smoking can make the symptoms of asthma and chronic bronchitis worse, and make life miserable for people with allergic conditions.

Maternal smoking has a harmful effect on pregnancy, including an increased risk of miscarriage, prematurity, stillbirth, death soon after birth, low birth weight and fetal death.

There is increasing evidence to suggest that environmental tobacco smoke can bring about disease, including lung cancer, in healthy adults, children and infants.

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It is on the basis of these facts that I advise nonsmokers to avoid exposure to cigarette smoke wherever possible, and that, in particular, they should protect infants and children from this smoke.

The San Bernardino County Clean Indoor Air Coalition is doing outstanding work in not only bringing these dangers to the public's attention, but also in helping to pass legislation and creating educational programs that will help us reach the goal of a Smoke Free Society by the Year 2000.

I encourage responsible individuals everywhere to support your good work.

Sincerely yours,

*[Signature]*

C. Everett Koop, M.D.  
Surgeon General

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