

Marion County Health Department is observing the anniversary of the Smoke Free Illinois Act this month by keeping Marion County Smoke Free.

On January 1, 2008 the Smoke-Free Illinois Act (SFIA) was implemented. The SFIA is a comprehensive state-law that requires public places and places of employment, including offices, warehouses, retail stores, hospitals, student dormitories, private clubs, private residences, shopping centers, restaurants, bars, taverns and gaming facilities, be completely smoke-free inside and within 15 feet from entrances, exits, windows that open and ventilation intakes.

### **Smoke-Free Laws and Health**

Breathing secondhand smoke for even a short time can have immediate adverse effects on the cardiovascular system and interferes with the normal functioning of the heart, blood and vascular systems in ways that increase the risk of a heart attack. Persons who already have asthma or other respiratory conditions are at especially high risk for being affected by secondhand smoke and should take special precautions to avoid secondhand smoke exposure. The evidence base for declines in hospitalizations for respiratory and cardiovascular diseases following implementation of smoke-free bans has been established through numerous studies in cities and states throughout the United States.

According to the Surgeon General, the science is clear: There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke. Just as tobacco smoke causes lung cancer, heart attacks, strokes, and other preventable diseases in smokers, second-hand smoke causes disease and death in non-smokers, as well. Smoke-free laws not only decrease exposure to tobacco smoke and the resulting disease and death, they also decrease the number of youth who start smoking, increase the number of smokers who quit, and cut health care costs for smokers and non-smokers alike.

### **Smoke-Free Illinois Success Story**

- Since Illinois' comprehensive smoke-free law, it has been estimated that 30,000 heart attacks and other heart-related hospitalizations have been prevented.
- Heart disease related hospitalizations have decreased by an estimated 9.3 percent.
- An estimated \$1.18 billion in health care costs have been saved.

## **Marion County Success Story**

- Marion County Health Department (MCHD) has seen a decrease in the number of complaints of violations of SFIA this FY15 Illinois Tobacco-Free Communities grant period. FY14 had 6 complaints of violations of the SFIA by this time last year, currently the health department has had 2 complaints.
- MCHD educates the public on SFIA and health hazards of secondhand smoke at all public speaking presentations, health fairs, health department clients and on the health department's website.
- MCHD's environmental staff conduct random compliance checks on food and non-food businesses, investigates complaints and can write citations and delivers education from SFIA to new business owners.

