New laws come into effect on smoke-free outdoor areas

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**PUBLISHED**

17th January 2013

**TOPIC**

[Police & Justice](http://www.nsw.gov.au/news?field_topic_tid=23)

**As of 7 January 2013, changes to legislation on smoke-free outdoor areas came into effect across NSW.**

These changes are a key strategy in reducing community exposure to second-hand smoke, tobacco-related harm and the uptake of smoking.

The smoke-free areas were chosen as they are public outdoor places popular with children and families, or which can be crowded, or at which there is limited opportunity to avoid second-hand smoke.

Smoking is now banned in the following outdoor places:

* Within 10 metres of children’s play equipment in outdoor public spaces;
* Spectator areas at sports grounds or other recreational areas;
* Swimming pool complexes;
* Railway platforms, light rail stops, light rail stations, bus stops, taxi ranks and ferry wharves;
* Within four metres of a pedestrian access point to a public building.

There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke, the smoke which smokers exhale after inhaling from a lit cigarette. In adults, breathing second-hand tobacco smoke can heighten the risk of cardiovascular disease and lung cancer and worsen the effects of other illnesses such as bronchitis and asthma.

Evidence shows that exposing ex-smokers to other people’s tobacco smoke increases the chance of them relapsing to smoking.

Inhaling second-hand tobacco smoke is even more dangerous for children, as their airways are smaller and their immune systems less developed, which makes them more susceptible to the negative health effects of second-hand tobacco smoke.

There is emerging evidence that under some circumstances, tobacco smoke affects the air quality of outdoor locations just as much as indoor locations.

These new requirements are enforceable by law. The ban on smoking within four metres of a pedestrian entrance to or exit from a public building will be delayed for licensed premises and restaurants until 6 July 2015.