

THE DANGERS OF SECONDHAND SMOKE

- Secondhand smoke (SHS) is a Class A carcinogen. Like radon and asbestos, prolonged exposure to secondhand smoke is known to cause cancer in both humans and domestic animals.
- Secondhand smoke contains over 7,000 compounds, at least 70 of which are known to cause cancer. This cocktail of deadly chemicals includes:
 - **Formaldehyde** - Used to preserve dead bodies
 - **Hydrogen Cyanide** - Used to make chemical weapons
 - **Ethylene Oxide** - Used to make anti-freeze
 - **Arsenic** - A deadly pesticide
 - **Polonium-210** - A radioactive element
 - **Cadmium** - A toxic metal used in batteries
 - **Benzene** - A component of gasoline and crude oil
- SHS is more toxic than mainstream smoke inhaled directly by smokers.
- Besides cancer, SHS causes numerous serious illnesses including: asthma, emphysema, sinus infections, ear infections, chronic cough, sudden infant death syndrome and heart disease.
- After just five minutes of exposure, the main artery carrying blood from the aorta stiffens as much as if the person had actually smoked a cigarette. This causes the heart to work harder to pump blood.
- SHS can impair coronary circulation in as little as 30 minutes of exposure.
- SHS exposure can cause heart attacks and strokes.
- More than 50,000 deaths per year are attributed to secondhand smoke exposure. 700 of these deaths are in Oklahoma. Causes of death include heart disease and lung cancer.
- SHS causes more than 150,000 cases of pneumonia and bronchitis each year in infants under 18 months of age.
- Secondhand smoke is highly toxic to pets. It causes numerous forms of cancer as well as allergic reactions resulting in scratching, biting and chewing of the skin.
- The U.S. Surgeon General has declared that there is no safe level of exposure to SHS.