



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Smoke-filled Air in Detroit Casinos Deemed Unhealthy *Hazardous Pollution Levels Found in all Venues*

Lansing, Mich. – Despite the claim that their air ventilation systems address the dangers of secondhand smoke, air quality testing (AQT) conducted in Detroit’s three casinos revealed indoor pollution levels that are eight times higher than outdoor air.

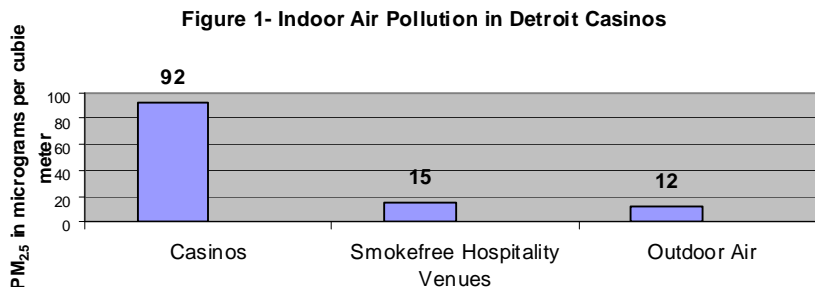
The testing at each of Detroit’s three casinos was sponsored by the Campaign for Smokefree Air and took place on Saturday, April 18, 2009. The tests measured the amount of tobacco smoke derived fine particle air pollution in each casino. Each location was measured over a 40-minute period using the TSI SidePak AM510 Personal Aerosol Monitor.

“Results from the air quality assessments in each casino reinforce that casinos need to be included in smokefree legislation,” said Katherine Knoll, spokesperson for CSA and senior director of advocacy for the American Heart Association. “Casino workers deserve the same protection as any other employee. These workers are unfortunately exposed to high levels of air pollution on a daily basis in order to earn a paycheck.”

The air quality was measured using Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) standards, established to effectively measure air quality for the protection of public health. PM_{2.5} is the concentration of particulate matter in the air smaller than 2.5 microns in diameter. Particles of this size are released in significant amounts from burning cigarettes and are easily inhaled deep into the lungs.

Key findings include:

- The average of the fine particle indoor air pollution in these casinos was 92, which the EPA deemed unhealthy. *[Note: The EPA deems healthy air quality levels at 15 and below.]*
- The average indoor air pollution in these casinos is eight times higher than outdoor pollution levels in Detroit.



The SidePak AM 510 weighs one pound and measures different particle sizes in the air. This small machine measures airborne particle mass-concentration and can be adjusted to capture different particle size.

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Similar AQT, sponsored by the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Tobacco, was conducted in three Pennsylvania casinos currently exempted by the state's smokefree law. The average of the fine particle indoor air pollution in these casinos was 106, which the EPA deems unhealthy. The study also concluded that six out of every 10,000 Pennsylvania casino workers will die each year due to secondhand smoke exposure. The average indoor air pollution levels were six times higher than outdoor Pennsylvania air. This study reinforces the fact that exempting casinos from smokefree legislation still leaves a large amount of workers at risk.

In 2005 and 2006, air quality of 90 bars and restaurants was measured in eight Michigan cities finding similar unhealthy levels as the casino testing. AQT was conducted in both smoking and nonsmoking sections of the locations measured. The average of the eight cities in the smoking sections monitored measured at 147.75, which the EPA deems very unhealthy. Nonsmoking sections of restaurants in Detroit, Kalamazoo, and Saginaw measured at an average of 50.3 that the EPA deems as unhealthy. These results reinforced the fact that nonsmoking sections do not provide a barrier from secondhand smoke exposure.

The results of the AQT also support the findings in the report published U.S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona in June of 2006. The report, *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*, also proves that there is no safe level of secondhand smoke exposure and says the only way to protect people from the risks associated with secondhand smoke is to eliminate smoking indoors. The report also concluded that ventilation systems do not work, noting that these systems can not remove all the poisons, toxins, gases and particles found in secondhand smoke.

A poll released in March, conducted by Lansing-based EPIC/MRA, stated that two-thirds of voters were in favor of including casinos in the legislation. Sixty-four (64) percent said that casinos should be included in the law, agreeing that it is only fair that casino employees should have the same protection from secondhand smoke on the job as other workers.

In May, the House passed HB 4377 sponsored by Rep. Lee Gonzales (D-Flint Township) which would create smokefree workplaces with the exception of casino floors and existing cigar bars. The bill was sent to the Senate for consideration and assigned to State Government Operations and Reform committee chaired by Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop. CSA is advocating for the Senate to pass comprehensive smokefree legislation as they did in the last legislative session.

The Campaign for Smokefree Air is a grassroots coalition with more than 270 members, including leadership from the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Lung Association of Michigan, Michigan Health & Hospital Association, and Michigan State Medical Society, as well as other statewide groups that are committed to passing a smokefree workplace law. For more information about the Campaign for Smokefree Air, please visit www.MakeMIAirSmokefree.org.

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