



# No smoking in spectator areas at public sports grounds

THE  
FACTS

Section 6A of the *Smoke-free Environment Act 2000* makes a number of outdoor public places smoke-free.

Smoking is banned in spectator areas at public sports grounds and other recreational areas in NSW. However, smoking is only banned when an organised sporting event is being held.

Major sporting facilities are included under the definition of a public sports ground and are required to comply with the law. Other outdoor sporting facilities, such as Local Council playing fields, are also covered by the law.

## **Is smoking banned only in spectator areas which are covered?**

No. The smoking ban applies to all spectator areas at sports grounds and other recreational areas when they are being used for an organised sporting event. The law applies to both **covered and uncovered** spectator areas and whether seating is provided or not.

## **Does the ban only cover the time that the players are competing?**

No. The smoking ban applies for the entire duration of the organised sporting event. This includes pre match and half time games and entertainment that form part of the sporting event.

## **Is a sport practice session regarded as an organised sporting event?**

Yes. A practice session at a sports ground is regarded as an organised sporting event for the purposes of the Act.

## **Will there be signage to indicate where smoking is not permitted?**

Due to the vast array of different sports grounds and recreational areas, the law does not require signs to be displayed to indicate that smoking is not permitted.

However, 'No-Smoking' signage is strongly encouraged. Signage may be required in the future if regulations are made requiring a class of sports grounds or other recreational area to display signs. .

## **What is a spectator area?**

A spectator area is an area set aside for or being used by spectators to watch an organised sporting event at a sports ground or other recreational area, but only when an organised sporting event is being held there.

## How will this be enforced?

NSW Health is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the *Smoke-free Environment Act 2000*. NSW Health Inspectors are authorised to enforce the ban on smoking at public sports grounds and recreational areas during organised sporting events.

Some major sporting facilities have already banned smoking in outdoor seating areas but permit smoking in designated outdoor smoking areas within the facility. The law will prohibit smoking in all spectator areas of the facility, regardless of whether seating is provided or the area is covered or uncovered. Where major sporting facilities have already introduced smoke-free outdoor policies which extend beyond the laws, these can continue to apply.

On the spot fines of \$300 may apply to individuals who smoke in spectator areas at public sports grounds or other recreational areas during organised sporting events.

## Why is this new Act in place?

Public sports grounds are a popular public outdoor setting for exercise and recreation and often attract large numbers of people, particularly families with children.

There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke. This is the smoke which smokers exhale after inhaling from a lit cigarette.

In adults, breathing second-hand tobacco smoke can increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, lung cancer and other lung diseases. It can worsen the effects of other illnesses such as asthma and bronchitis. Exposing ex-smokers to other people's tobacco smoke increases the chance of relapsing to smoking.

For children, inhaling second-hand tobacco smoke is even more dangerous. This is because children's airways are smaller, and their immune systems are less developed. These differences make children more likely to suffer health problems due to second-hand smoke such as bronchitis, pneumonia and asthma.

Creating smoke-free outdoor areas, such as in public sports grounds and recreational areas, can support those who have quit and make smoking less visible to children and young people.

## How does this affect Local Council bans on smoking?

Many NSW councils, under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*, have progressively introduced their own smoking bans. Where these bans are in place, they can continue to be enforced by Local Council rangers.

## More information

For more information or to report a suspected breach, please contact the Tobacco Information Line on **1800 357 412** or visit **[health.nsw.gov.au/smokefree](http://health.nsw.gov.au/smokefree)**

Non-English speaking people can access the Tobacco Information Line via the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50.



Health