

13 May 2015

Eastern Suburbs businesses to adopt smoke-free outdoor dining

NSW Health is reminding the community that from 6 July 2015, all commercial outdoor dining areas in NSW, including hotels, clubs, restaurants and cafes will be smoke-free, under the *Smoke-free Environment Act 2000*.

This means staff and patrons of hotels, clubs, restaurants and cafes will be able to work and dine outdoors without being exposed to harmful second-hand tobacco smoke.

Professor Mark Ferson, Director of the South Eastern Sydney Public Health Unit, said NSW Health is working closely with local businesses to help them get ready for smoke-free outdoor dining.

“There is strong public support for making outdoor dining areas smoke-free and a number of businesses have already voluntarily banned smoking in their outdoor dining areas, with positive results,” Professor Ferson said.

Chris Minas, owner of Public Espresso café, located at Westfield Bondi Junction, adopted smoke-free outdoor dining 15 months ago and said the change has met the needs of his customers and has positively impacted his business.

“Before we went smoke-free customers would ask ‘where can we eat where we aren’t subject to cigarettes,’” Mr Minas said.

“Many people would just sit there and smoke. They weren’t buying any food. Now people are eating and we are making much more business.”

Professor Ferson said the legislation applies to all ignited smoking products, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes and water-pipes.

“Under the *Smoke-free Environment Act 2000*, smoking will be banned in seated outdoor dining areas while food is being served, with NSW Health Authorised Inspectors able to issue on the spot fines of \$300 for individuals and penalties of up to \$5500 for occupiers who ignore the ban.

“Since the beginning of 2013, smoking has been banned in a number of outdoor public places including all NSW public transport stops and stations, within 10m of children’s playgrounds, at spectator areas of sporting grounds, at public swimming pools and within 4m of a pedestrian entrance to or exit from a public building, under the *Smoke-free Environment Act 2000*,” Professor Ferson said.

A public awareness campaign about smoke-free outdoor dining began this month.

Professor Ferson said the campaign resonates with the goals of World No Tobacco Day on May 31, which aims to lower the number of tobacco uses and consequently decrease the death and disease caused by smoking, as well as those subject to cigarette smoke.

“This campaign is designed to work in parallel with other initiatives. Tobacco smoking is one of the leading causes of preventable death and disease among Australians, killing over 15,000 each year and costing an estimated \$31.5 billion each year in social and economic costs,” Professor Ferson said.

NSW Health invites businesses to register on health.nsw.gov.au/smokefree for updates about smoke-free outdoor dining and to order free materials including an industry guide and mandatory outdoor ‘no smoking’ signage.

For further information regarding NSW Health smoke-free legislation, including smoke-free outdoor dining, please call the Tobacco Information Line on 1800 357 412 or visit www.health.nsw.gov.au/smokefree

For information on how to quit smoking, visit www.iCanQuit.com.au or ring the Quitline on 13 78 48.

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