

Web-site: [www.no-smoke.org](http://www.no-smoke.org)

## **LOCAL SMOKEFREE WORKPLACE LAW REDUCES HEART ATTACK RATES**

A new study conducted in Helena, Montana and presented at the Annual Scientific Sessions of the American College of Cardiology in Chicago today shows that the health benefits of a comprehensive smoke-free workplace law may be much more immediate than previously thought, resulting in a decline of nearly 60% in the number of heart attacks.

The study, authored by Richard P. Sargent, MD, Robert M. Shepard, MD, and Stanton A. Glantz, PhD, looked at the number of hospital admissions in Helena, Montana for acute myocardial infarctions (AMI) during a sixth month period and compared the numbers to the same time period in the previous four years, and looked at figures for surrounding communities without similar smoke-free laws. There was a 60% drop in admissions for heart attacks from people living or working in Helena where a smoke-free ordinance was in effect and no change for people living further away.

According to Cynthia Hallett, Executive Director of Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights, "The bottom line is simple. Secondhand smoke kills. This study validates that there are important and immediate health benefits to smoke-free workplace policies. All nonsmokers deserve to breath smoke-free air in enclosed workplaces and public places."

Communities across the U.S. have taken steps to protect nonsmokers from the disease and death caused by secondhand smoke. Cities as diverse as Helena, MT, Tempe, AZ, Snowmass Village, CO, and El Paso, TX have enacted laws that bring smoke-free air to enclosed workplaces and public places. In fact, over 1600 U.S. communities have enacted local smoke-free air ordinances with dozens providing for smoke-free air in all enclosed workplaces, including restaurants and bars, according to the ANR Foundation Local Ordinance Database (chart available at: <http://www.no-smoke.org/ordgraph.pdf>).

"Smokefree indoor air is a mainstream idea whose time has come," said Hallett. "As the public has learned more about the health dangers associated with secondhand smoke, people have supported smoke-free policies as a way to address this easily preventable cause of premature death and chronic disease."

This study is further evidence that smoke-free ordinances benefit everyone in a community, including residents and workers, who as a result of these policies are less exposed to a known carcinogen.

Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights is a national, member-based, not-for-profit organization based in Berkeley, CA that is dedicated to helping nonsmokers breathe smoke-free air in enclosed public places and workplaces.

###

For more information on this study, including a Power Point presentation, please contact ANR at 510-841-3032, ext.316.