

Happy New Year to Smoke-Free Oregon A Surprise Find

Oregon's Smokefree Workplace Law Extends to Bars, Bingo Halls and Bowling Centers at Midnight on Dec. 31

Starting at midnight on New Year's Eve, Oregon's Smokefree Workplace Law protects nearly every Oregon employee from the health risks of secondhand smoke. The new law covers bars, bingo halls and bowling centers, as well as 75 percent of hotel and motel sleeping rooms and all employee breakrooms. In addition, every Oregon business will be required to maintain a 10-foot smokefree zone around doors, windows and ventilation systems.

"Every Oregonian benefits from this law," said Dr. Bruce Goldberg, director of the Oregon Department of Human Services. "Employees will be able to punch in without endangering their health, businesses will save money on maintenance and sick time costs and the public will have more smokefree choices. Laws like this are proven to help smokers quit. This is a monumental change for Oregonians." Business owners are responsible for complying with the law and preventing smoking in and around their property. Employees and the public can help ensure that the law is followed by reporting violations, beginning Jan. 1, by calling 1-866-621-6107 or completing an online complaint form at www.healthoregon.org/smokefree. The Oregon Public Health Division will investigate complaints and give citations to business owners who are unwilling to comply with the law.

Oregonians strongly support the new law, passed by the 2007 Oregon Legislature. Surveys show that 90 percent of Oregonians, including 76 percent of smokers, prefer smokefree indoor workplaces, and 86 percent say employees should be protected from secondhand smoke.

Many businesses support the new law as well. A recent survey showed that 66 percent of businesses affected by the new law are already smokefree. Many other businesses have been preparing for the change all year, including some that opted to go smokefree in advance of the law and others that are ready to celebrate as the law takes effect.

All Oregonians benefit from cleaner air, but businesses have their own reasons to celebrate, as they are likely to reap the rewards of a productive workplace including healthier workers, fewer sick days and reduced cleaning costs. They also stand to gain new customers from among the 80 percent of Oregonians who don't smoke. Many businesses are using the new law as an opportunity to reupholster furniture and install new carpet to get rid of smoke damage.

The law provides an incentive for employees and customers who smoke to quit. Seventy-five percent of smokers in Oregon want to kick the habit, and a smokefree workplace is a proven way to help people go smokefree for good. Oregon's Quit Line is a free service available to all Oregonians at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-877-2NO-FUME. Also many private insurance plans cover cessation support, proven to make attempts to quit more successful. Smokers should ask their providers for information.

Tobacco takes a tremendous toll on Oregon. Tobacco contributed to 22 percent of all deaths in the state in 2005, making Oregon residents four times more likely to die from tobacco-related causes than from motor vehicle accidents, suicide, AIDS and homicide combined. The direct medical expenditures and the indirect cost of lost productivity due to premature death from tobacco-related causes costs Oregonians more than \$2 billion a year. Lawmakers believe that through reducing secondhand smoke exposure, and by making it harder to smoke in public places, Oregon can prevent tobacco-related illness and death—something good for all Oregonians and Oregon businesses.

The Oregon Tobacco Prevention and Education Program (TPEP) works with local health departments, tribes, schools and community organizations to deliver a comprehensive tobacco prevention program to all Oregon residents. Program activities are based on evidence-based strategies to reduce and prevent tobacco use. For more information, visit <http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/tobacco/>.

Vernonia Cares (continued frpm page 1)

as well as flour, sugar and margarine; mandarin oranges and jello mix; fruit cocktail; coffee; pickles; olives and even popcorn. Clients were also handed a voucher from Sentry Market to pick up a turkey and a bag of potatoes. "Sentry Market stored the frozen turkeys and potatoes for us, so we didn't have to move them," said Welch. "That was a huge help. Vernonia Cares also received donations of milk and fresh produce from the Vernonia School District which were not going to be used because school was closed all week due to snow."

Sentry Market not only stored the turkeys and potatoes for Vernonia Cares, they also made a major donation of ninety-six turkeys, making sure the program was possible this year. "Sentry really came through for us," said Welch. Welch noted that the remainder of the turkeys and fixings were purchased through donations of money and food, including from local churches, who all collected targeted items like gravy, stuffing, cranberry jelly, and pumpkin. "Almost every local business donated in some way," said Welch. "This food bank is so strongly supported by this community."

Snow accumulations of about 12 inches, with more falling all day, forced volunteers to hand-deliver boxes to numerous clients who had no way of picking up their Christmas treats themselves. Josette Mitchell, a Vernonia Cares board member, who spent the early part of the day helping hand out boxes, was spotted with her husband, Casey, and daughter, Saylor, at 4:00 PM outside the Sentry Market. "We only have two more to go," said Mitchell, as she hustled inside to gather the turkeys and potatoes they had volunteered to deliver.

Welch noted that every child receives a candy cane as well, courtesy of Pat and Bob Stacklie, who are long-time supporters of Vernonia Cares. "The Stacklies make sure every kid gets their candy cane every year," said Welch.

The Christmas Food Boxes are just one more example of the great work Vernonia Cares and all its supporters do in this community, year after year.

By Scott Laird

I recently received a phone call from Jim McGill, a gentleman from Manzanita. Mr. McGill told me that he was in possession of some old ink print blocks from the Vernonia Eagle that had been given to him years ago, and had been sitting on a shelf in his garage. He said he had a masthead stamp and a map. He found Vernonia's Voice on-line, and was wondering if I was interested in the box?

Absolutely, I replied, and we arranged for Mr. McGill to send them to me.

What I found when the box arrived a few days later was even more interesting. The box contained twelve blocks, including the masthead, a map of Columbia County, a map of Portland city streets, and a number of other symbols and stamps. There were advertisements, including a stamp for Ivory Soap Flakes, Meier and Frank, FOE, and a number of other symbols.



A stamp of Columbia County from the Vernonia Eagle, recently discovered in Manzanita



The Vernonia Eagle Masthead

So far, I have not had time to attempt to learn anything more about these stamps. My intention is to donate them to the Vernonia Pioneer Museum, so they can be viewed by anyone interested in Vernonia's history.

In the meantime, I would be interested in talking with anyone with any

firsthand knowledge about how these blocks were used, about the Vernonia Eagle, or any other history about old newsprinting.

You can reach me at 503-367-0098 or by email at scott@vernoniasvoice.com.



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