

SMOKEFREE TRIBAL CASINOS



Tribal Casinos: Creating Safe, Healthy Workplaces

In 1988, the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act legalized tribal gaming operations. Today, **243 tribes** across 28 states operate **468** gaming facilities. According to the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA), total gross gaming revenue in 2013 was \$28.6 billion. Casino City's 2014 Indian Gaming Report notes Indian gaming facilities including non-gaming operations generated approximately 679,000 jobs. Casinos are a positive source of economic development for many tribes.

Smokefree tribal casinos ensure that gaming jobs are in an environment that is healthy and free from secondhand commercial tobacco smoke, and beneficial to all tribal employees, patrons and customers. Since sovereign nations are not subject to state smokefree laws, tribal leaders can implement smokefree and commercial tobacco-free policies for their buildings, casinos, and event centers.

The only way to protect worker and customer health is to be entirely smokefree indoors. Ventilation systems, smoking sections, or smoking rooms only reduce the odor of tobacco smoke. These systems do not stop smoke from spreading, nor do they remove the toxic gases, chemicals, and particulates in secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke has a non-linear dose response. Merely reducing, but not eliminating, the smoke does not address the health hazards. **According the U.S. Surgeon General and all leading health agencies, there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.**

There are more than **500** smokefree commercial and tribal gambling facilities in the U.S. For more information including sample resolutions and model tribal worksite policies, **contact us at 510.841.3032.**

Factors Affecting Casino Visits

In the early 1990's, lobbyists for commercial tobacco companies invented a **myth** that businesses would lose 30% of their revenue to smokefree policies. **The fact is** that every legitimate, peer-reviewed economic study has shown that business remains the same or improves after the implementation of a smokefree law or rule. This makes sense when you consider that more than **80%** of the U.S. population is made up of nonsmokers. Many factors impact casino revenues. Some include:

- **The Competition.** There is expansion and saturation of the casino market, as well as competition with other forms of gambling (such as VGT's, Fantasy Sports betting, "Internet Cafes," and iGaming);
- **The Economy.** There is uneven recovery from the economic downturn of 2008/2009 which impacted casinos from coast to coast; and
- **The Weather.** Numerous casinos were affected by recent extreme weather and driving conditions including heavy snows, the "Polar Vortex," and Hurricane Sandy.

What isn't a factor for gaming competition? Smokefree indoor air. Smokefree casinos compete successfully against non-smokefree ones in numerous competitive regional markets. It's worth noting that people still smoke at smokefree indoor air casinos—by simply stepping outside to light up at convenient outdoor smoking patios located off the gaming floor. Being smokefree indoors is not only good for health it can save money, grow new business, and boost length and frequency of customer visits.

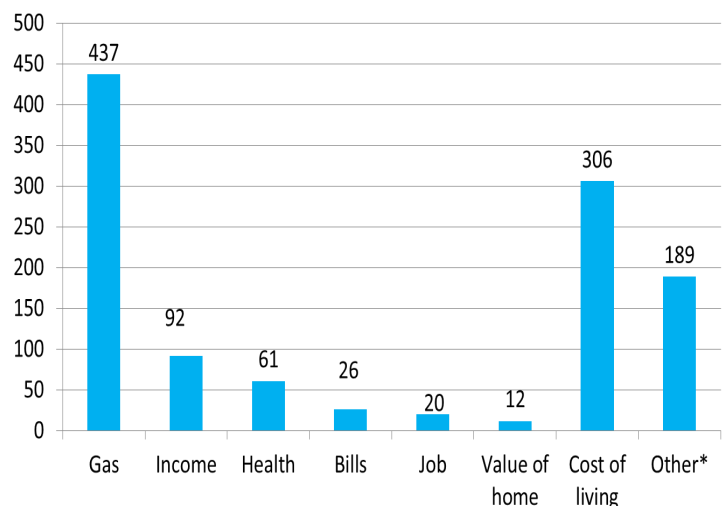
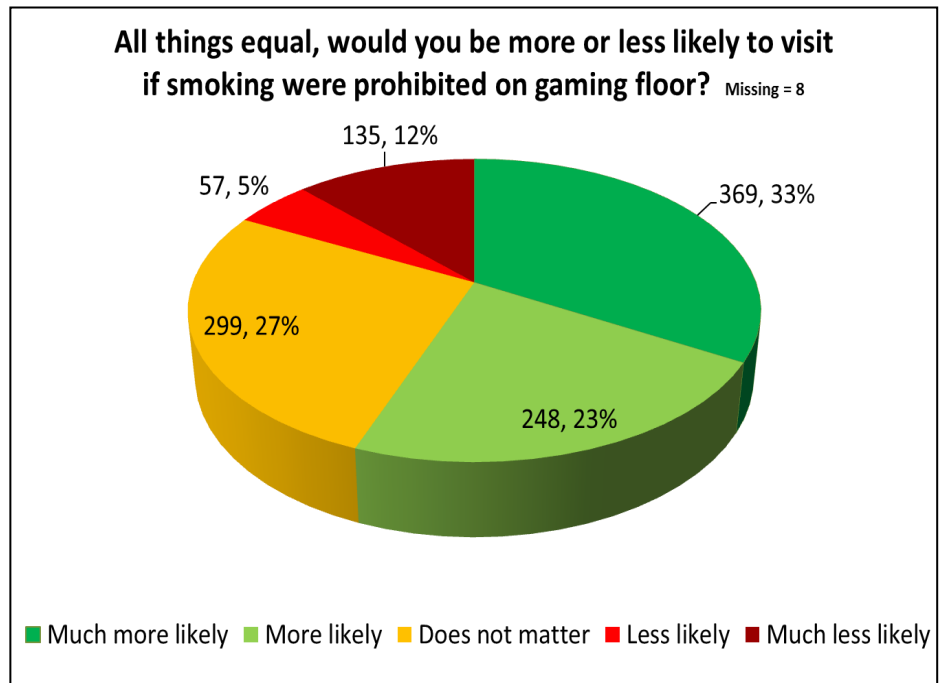


Figure 1. Tribal casino survey results from Great Lakes region: Responses to "Have you reduced number of trips to the casino due to any of the following?" (by number of people)

Study Shows Smokefree Policy Would Not Reduce Tribal Casino Patronage

How many of your casino's gaming and non-gaming customers smoke? How would they feel about a smokefree indoor air policy? Consider conducting a players club survey and find out. In a recent study of customers in a tribal casino's tiered player club, tribal researchers found that patrons would visit the casino more often if smoking was prohibited, projecting a **20% increase in casino patronage**. The article "**Gambling with Our Health, Smoke-Free Policy Would Not Reduce Tribal Casino Patronage**" published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, 2014 (Brokenleg, Barber, Bennett, Boyce, Jernigan) determined not only that, "a **large majority of surveyed casino patrons do not smoke, but they were also bothered by the casino smoke and believed that secondhand smoke is harmful.**"

These findings are consistent with other studies that have shown that no-smoking policies are not cited as the reasons people visit casinos less, and smokefree policies do not result in revenue loss for casinos. The researchers stated, "This study suggests that **tribal communities may be uniquely suited, particularly given their sovereign political and economic status, to play a leadership role in the smoke-free casino movement.**"



Nathan Moose — Oglala Sioux 1958-2013



Nathan Moose, casino worker and smokefree casino advocate.

Nathan Moose worked for 11 years in a casino that allowed smoking. Due to his exposure to secondhand smoke at work, Nathan developed a lung disease called Bronchiectasis. We lost Nathan on Oct. 17, 2013.

"Nathan's passing is a powerful reminder that many workers are still exposed to deadly secondhand smoke in their workplace. We at ANR had the pleasure of knowing and working with both Nathan and Jean Ann, and supporting their efforts for commercial smokefree Pow-wows as well as smokefree casinos. We will continue the fight to bring smokefree work-places to all workers," said Cynthia Hallett, Executive Director, Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights.

Nathan was featured in a Centers for Disease Control TIPS media campaign. He and his wife Jean Ann have been advocates for smokefree air and the traditional use of ceremonial tobacco for more than six years.

Like other casino workers, Nathan loved his job and the people he got to meet and entertain. The only drawback for Nathan was the hazardous secondhand smoke. You can listen to more worker stories at www.smokefreecasinos.org/videos/.

Keep Tobacco Sacred

Sacred tobacco is different from commercial tobacco. Commercial tobacco contains many carcinogens that are harmful to American Indian people. When abused, addictive commercial tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death for American Indian people.

A casino free from commercial tobacco smoke preserves the sacred status of traditional tobacco and its ceremonial cultural uses, while eliminating dangerous exposure to toxins and carcinogens in commercial tobacco's secondhand smoke.

By providing a clean air environment, those visiting and working in casinos can be protected and kept safe from harm.



Most Tribal Casino Customers Do Not Smoke

Research shows that roughly **8 out of 10 gamblers are nonsmokers**, just like the general population. And in a study published in the journal *Bio-Med Central Public Health*, researchers found that only **7%** of patrons in 11 southern California casinos were actively smoking when observed during a visual survey. In other words, **non-smoking patrons outnumbered smoking patrons 13 to 1, on average**. Fewer than 10% of patrons smoked during any of the 22 total casino visits by the researchers.

A great way to begin understanding current tiered player smoking status and opinions is with a player club survey.

When one person light up indoors, everyone in the building smokes. Smokefree indoor air saves lives.

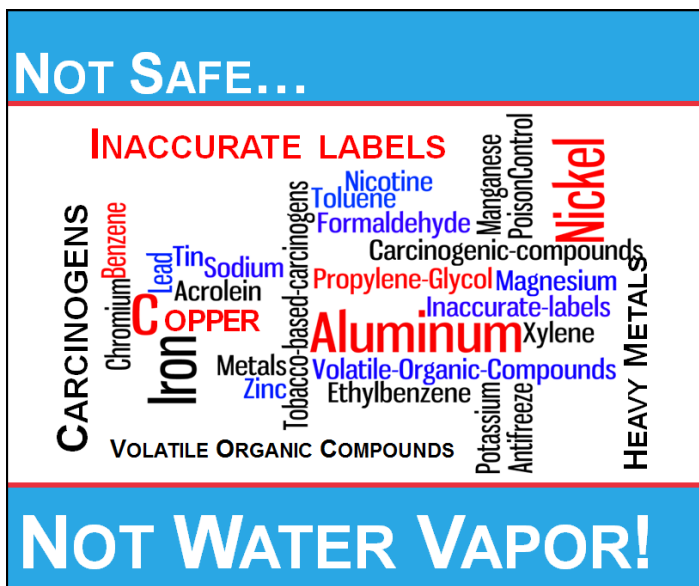


Electronic Cigarettes Emit Toxic Chemical Aerosol Not Water Vapor

E-Cigarette vendors sometimes claim that electronic smoking devices release “nothing but water vapor.” However, **water is not even an ingredient in electronic smoking devices**.

The “smoke” you see is NOT a vapor: it is an aerosol containing toxins like those listed in the infographic to the right from the Chicago Department of Public Health.

The aerosol contains **nicotine**, **hazardous ultrafine particles** that lodge deeply in the lungs of nonsmokers, and **toxins** known to cause cancer. These products pose a health hazard to non-users and should not be used inside smokefree workplaces and public places.





Healthy Gaming Environments

Implementing policies that eliminate commercial tobacco use in tribally-controlled spaces is an effective way of addressing the serious health risks caused by secondhand smoke exposure.

Tribal governments have a unique opportunity to protect those individuals residing, working, or visiting sovereign tribal lands. Everyone should have the right to breathe clean air.

A smokefree resolution or ordinance will protect many tribal employees, children, and adult tribal members from secondhand smoke, improving health and decreasing sick days.

Tribal governments can demonstrate leadership by implementing smokefree policies, resolutions and rules to protect the health of all tribal members—now and for generations to come.

Benefits of Smokefree Enterprises

- ♠ Reduced disease, death and **health care** costs in the workforce
- ♠ Reduced **property and life insurance** costs
- ♠ Reduced risk of **litigation** from casino workers
- ♠ Reduced risk of **fire damage** and other accidents
- ♠ Reduced **maintenance, equipment, furnishings, and cleaning costs**
- ♠ Greater appeal to **non-smoking customers** who are the majority of gaming and non-gaming patrons
- ♠ Reduced **employee sickness** and turnover due to ill health
- ♠ Increased **productivity on the job**—the average smoker takes six ten-minute smoking breaks per work day, or five hours of lost work per week
- ♠ Honors a **traditional use** of tobacco

Planning for Smokefree Indoor Air Success

Many casinos have successfully transitioned from smoke-filled to smokefree spaces. There are numerous lessons to be shared—from player club surveys to signage and opportunities to grow revenue streams such as meetings/conventions.

Some smaller properties have allowed players to save current play with special signs, or have their machine locked for a few minutes while they step outside to a smoking patio.

One tip for success is a thoughtful approach to the design and placement of outdoor smoking areas—conveniently accessible from the gaming floors or F&B areas. This makes it simple—a non-issue—for customers to step out to smoke and come back in—without harming the health of customers and staff breathing indoors.

If you have never visited a 100% smokefree casino, we encourage you to do so. You will be amazed at how clean the facility is, how happy the staff is about working in a smokefree establishment, and how many players—smokers and nonsmokers—come out to play and enjoy other entertainment.

For more information on **how to open or make your establishment smokefree**, including sample resolutions, model tribal worksite policies, sample player club survey questions, and more, **contact us at 510.841.3032**