

Monday, November 17, 2008

Pennsylvania Smoking Ban - Lots of Exceptions..



November 17, 2008 - The Pennsylvania health department said 1,727 taverns qualified for an "exception" from the state Clean Indoor Air Act, which banned smoking in public places and retail establishments including restaurants, effective September 11, 2008.

Pennsylvania's law is not as strict as the other surrounding states and it comes after a bitter battle that left a bad taste in some people's mouths.

Ninety percent of all applications for an exception were approved, said Stacy Kriedeman, health department spokeswoman. Taverns can allow smoking only if their food sales are less than 20 percent of total revenues. Ms. Kriedeman said the state next will evaluate applications from "type 2" establishments -- restaurants that also operate bars. Smoking is banned in restaurants. But under type-2 rules, smoking can be permitted in the bar if it has a separate entrance and ventilation system with a full wall dividing it from the restaurant. On-site inspections are necessary before type 2 exceptions can be granted, she said.

To date, the health department has received 771 complaints of smoking violations statewide and has issued 170 violation notices. The state strategy in the early months of the ban is to notify business owners that they face fines of up to \$1,000 if they fail to eliminate smoking inside establishments not exempt from the law.

Related news briefs: [Pennsylvania - Cigarette Vending Machines NO Longer Wanted..](#); [Finally Pennsylvania's Smoking Ban Takes Effect Today..](#); [Ed Rendell, governor of Pennsylvania wants to pay for providing health insurance](#); [Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell is proposing an excise tax on tobacco..](#)

Reference: [361 taverns in county avoid smoking ban 1,727 exemptions are granted statewide](#) by David Templeton, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, 11/08/2008.