

**Non-Smokers' Movement of Australia Inc. (NSMA)** (established in 1977) continues to advocate for everybody's right to breathe clean air, free from the toxins in secondhand tobacco smoke, everywhere, as well as fighting against Big Tobacco.

NSMA advocates on most issues under current discussion in Plan Melbourne – housing, transport, open spaces, recreation, environment, jobs – all can be affected by tobacco use and toxic tobacco smoke.

Tobacco continues to kill more Australians than any other single product, children continue to take up smoking, and tobacco is still being smoked indoors and outdoors, in public and private places, adversely affecting everyone in the vicinity.

And yet there are several approved **alternative nicotine replacement products** (patches, gums, sprays – not e-cigarettes,) which smokers can use safely in place of tobacco, without harming others. Prisons are currently using these products to protect workers and inmates.

Tobacco-smoke kills. If you can smell it, then the toxins are going into your lungs, and your family's lungs, and doing harm. There is no safe level of tobacco smoke. The toxins can trigger a wide range of heart and lung diseases, including asthma, emphysema and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

It might seem unusual that a health-advocacy organization is interested in City Planning, but Victoria's Health Ministry has been very slow in responding to community concerns about the dangers of secondhand smoke. We therefore approach the issue from other angles, all in the interest of healthier, safer, and more prosperous communities in the future. Liveability matters.

Most Victorians don't smoke. Most smokers have tried to quit. There is no basic, legal right to smoke. Tobacco may be a legally available product but should not (rather like cars and chainsaws) be used where it may do harm to others – (Civil Liberties principle). There is no obligation for any proprietor to provide a smoking space for smoking. The toxins in secondhand smoke can trigger life-threatening diseases such as asthma, emphysema, COPD (Cardio Obstructive Pulmonary Disease), other heart and lung diseases and cancer, SIDS (Sudden Infant death Syndrome), and many other serious complaints.

Alternatively, everybody has the right to breathe clean air, free from toxins. Clean water, clean air – everybody's basic right.

**Housing:** The majority of city-based and inner-city housing will consist of multi-unit dwellings. Secondhand smoke seeps inside buildings and drifts around buildings. Secondhand smoke is especially difficult to escape from, and almost impossible to eliminate. Neighbours are expected to contain their noise levels. But smokers don't contain their poisonous emissions. However there are alternative nicotine products available to them, as previously mentioned. Nobody should be forced to barricade themselves into their homes in order to keep out poisons and protect the health of their families.

All multi-unit housing – public housing, retirement villages, strata units should be declared

universally smoke-free, for the health, safety and comfort of everyone, and possibly with initial nicotine replacement product funding assistance if requested (similar to prisons.).

**Jobs.** Those who work in congested areas, such as inner-city, are entitled to safe transport and safe working conditions on site, as well as access to safe recreation spaces during lunch-breaks, etc. Smokers (the minority of workers) should not expect paid smoking breaks and should move well away from others, preferably to a designated smoking space, to smoke. It is highly discriminatory to expect any worker to carry out his or her duties near smoking, such as continues to occur at gambling areas in pubs and clubs, on theatre stages, and at outdoor dining and drinking areas cafes, restaurants, pubs and clubs.

**A more Connected Melbourne – Transport**

Efficient and affordable public transport options become even more attractive when waiting areas for all forms of transport (buses, trains, ferries, taxis) are entirely smoke-free. This is especially important where and when school students, young families and older people use public transport. Smokers should move away to smoke – some might even quit. Additionally, we need to de-normalise smoking in the eyes of young people to reduce the chance of uptake.

Public streets, squares and roads should also be declared smoke-free – with a limited number of designated butt-bins made available (maximum one per city block) so that smokers would have somewhere to go and so that others would know which space to avoid.

**Liveable communities and neighbourhoods**

Communities which care for their neighbours will ensure that unsafe and unhealthy products aren't allowed to damage their most vulnerable members, the babies, disabled, frail- aged, and newcomers. Smoke-free recreational , sporting, shopping and meeting spaces ensure that everyone, even smokers, can enjoy these community spaces.

**Environment and water**

Poisonous cigarette butts have been the subject of countless hours of discussion here in Australia and around the world. They cause land and marine pollution and are unsightly. Tossed butts start thousands of bushfires around Australia. Dobbing in tossers obviously isn't effective, considering the dreadful number of poisonous butts we see everywhere around our cities and streets. Dog-walkers have learned to pick up their pets' droppings, but we rarely see smokers "doing the right thing". Suggestion: Tobacco retailers should not be allowed to sell a new packet of cigarettes unless the smoker brings back the equivalent number of butts (average weigh-in would suffice) – collected butts, in sealed bins, would go to Big tobacco for supervised disposal. A butt return/disposal scheme could start in Melbourne – there are precedents regarding packaging in other industries.

We are happy to join discussions regarding this very important aspect of Melbourne life – unfortunately, tobacco affects us all, but we can vastly reduce the potential damage with sensible planning.

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