



# Sparing Our Lungs: Creating a Smoke-Free Bowling Center

*A guide for bowling center owners and managers on the benefits of smoke-free bowling*

There is a new trend in the bowling world. Every year, more and more bowling centers around Minnesota and the United States are going 100% smoke free. Smoke-free bowling is a fun and positive experience that welcomes everyone to enjoy bowling at your center. Discover the benefits of creating a healthy environment for you, your staff, and your customers.

## The Harms of Secondhand Smoke

In 2006, the U.S. Surgeon General reported that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke, even for short periods of time. Breathing the pollutants produced by tobacco smoke can cause heart disease, lung cancer, respiratory infections, asthma attacks, and other severe health problems. Exposure to secondhand smoke kills approximately 65,000 people every year in the United States.

Customers and employees of bowling centers that are not smoke free breathe these toxins every day. The best way to protect the health and well-being of staff and patrons in your bowling center is to create a smoke-free environment where everyone can breathe easy.

### ***Ventilation and Smoking Areas are not the Answer***

Designated smoking rooms and ventilation systems are not designed to eliminate cancer-causing agents in secondhand smoke. A 2005 report by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers concluded that "at present, the only means of effectively eliminating health risk associated with indoor exposure is to ban smoking activity." Therefore, eliminating 100% of smoking indoors is the only way to fully protect the health of everyone.

### ***Being 100% Smoke Free Creates Healthier Air***

In the summer of 2006, the Mankato Area Smoke-Free Coalition monitored air pollutants in four bars and restaurants before and after the Mankato, MN smoke-free ordinance went into effect. The study found that there was an 86% decrease in the amount of dangerous indoor air pollutants after the ordinance was in place. By eliminating smoking indoors, Mankato businesses now offer clean, healthy air for their customers.

## Bowling is a Family Affair

Families love bowling. It is an exciting sport that people of all ages can enjoy. In 2005, the Bowling Proprietors Association of America (BPAA) conducted an Impact Study that concluded that there is a significant increase in youth and family bowling around the country. John Berglund, the Executive Director of BPAA, has said, "We're seeing the emergence of bowling as a family outing."<sup>1</sup> Bowling centers have a great opportunity to attract families by providing a smoke-free environment.

### ***Smoke-Free Facilities are Important to Families***

Families want to protect the health of their children. A mother of four children at a smoke-free bowling event in St. Paul, MN commented, "[Bowling] is such a nice family activity but we rarely go because the bowling alleys near us are smoky. We don't want the kids in that smoke." Other families attending smoke-free bowling events in St. Paul had similar feelings. Of the people at the events who completed surveys about smoke-free bowling, 88% of respondents said they are more likely to bring children and family members to a smoke-free bowling center.

A smoke-free bowling center appeals to families because it is a place where everyone can play in a safe, clean-air environment.



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# A New Generation of Bowlers

Here come the youth! According to the United States Bowling Congress, there are approximately 24 million youth bowlers across the country. Many studies have suggested that bowling may be the nation's most popular recreational sport.

## ***Youth Bowling is Growing***

The United States Bowling Congress reports that bowling is growing faster than *all* other high school sports. Youth bowlers are also a major portion of the bowling population. In 2005, bowlers age 12-17 represented 22% of all bowlers in America and were by far the largest number of any age group.<sup>2</sup>

Why this surge in youth bowling? As a bowling center manager, you've known the answer for a long time. "For a variety of reasons, the bottom line is it's cool to go bowling," says John Berglund, Executive Director of the BPAA.<sup>3</sup>

## ***Youth Appreciate Smoke-Free Bowling Centers***

At a smoke-free bowling event in St. Paul, MN a teenage girl who had family members who suffered from severe asthma commented, "Smoke-free bowling makes it safe for everyone, and I can enjoy bowling without the feeling of me suffocating!"

Appealing to youth bowlers is important for business. Youth bowlers are the next generation of customers. You can get youth hooked on bowling by providing them with an environment where they can bowl without the burden of burning eyes, coughing, sore throats, asthma attacks, and long-term health effects.



## **Going Smoke Free is Economically Viable**

If you own a smoke-free bowling center, it does not mean that your business will lose money. In fact, being smoke free can actually drive profits up.

### ***Nonsmokers Spend More Money***

Attracting more nonsmoking customers can mean gains for your business. According to the 2005 BPAA Impact Study, nonsmokers outspend smokers when it comes to bowling-related fees, food and beverage, and non-bowling related purchases.

### ***You'll Attract More Parties and Groups***

A smoke-free environment also opens the bowling center to more group bowling events. David Kolquist, owner of Skyline Lanes in Hermantown, MN, has seen the value of smoke-free bowling firsthand. In an interview with WDIO-TV in Duluth, Kolquist said, "I had a call this morning, a mother that's having a birthday party and her question was, 'Do you have smoking?...Because if you do, we're not coming. We're going somewhere else for our party.'"<sup>4</sup> Families, parties, and groups will appreciate the clean, smoke-free environment you provide.

### ***Smoke-Free Air Means Lower Costs***

Maintenance and insurance costs of a smoke-free building will be lower. As an added bonus, a smoke-free environment makes it easier for smoking employees to quit, causing employee health care costs to go down.<sup>5</sup> With fewer employees smoking, Minnesota businesses can save over \$1.14 billion in lost productivity due to smoking-related complications.<sup>6</sup>

## **Bowlers Support Smoke-Free Bowling Centers**

Going smoke free is not as hard as it might seem. There are numerous health and economic benefits, and the trends are on your side. Most bowlers are nonsmokers. The 2003 Minnesota Adult Tobacco Survey found that approximately 82% of Minnesota adults do not smoke.

A 2006 survey of residents in St. Paul, MN showed that more than 7 in 10 people surveyed favor the city's smoke-free ordinance, which includes bowling centers. A 2006 public opinion poll taken in the city of Hutchinson, MN concluded that 75% of Hutchinson residents support a smoke-free ordinance that includes bowling centers.

### ***League Bowlers Stick Around***

More and more league organizations and bowlers are recognizing the importance of smoke-free bowling centers. The American Bowling Congress and Women's International Bowling Congress championship tournaments are smoke free, meaning almost 100,000 contestants compete in smoke-free air.

After almost switching leagues to get away from smoky air, one St. Paul, MN league bowler was happy to see his regular bowling center go smoke free. He commented, "It is a great experience to be able to go bowling and not to have to breathe in the smoke (and not to have to change clothes in the garage)."

### ***Smoke-Free Centers Bring In New Customers***

The 1997 Bowling Benchmark Strategy Study found that a smoky environment was among the top reasons people chose not to bowl. A smoke-free bowling center gives people a reason to return to the lanes.

<sup>1</sup> Star Tribune, 12/30/05

<sup>2</sup> Associated Press, 5/5/06

<sup>3</sup> Palm Beach Post, 6/3/06

<sup>4</sup> WDIO-TV, 7/21/04

<sup>5</sup> <http://fammed.unc.edu/enter/toolbox/bowling.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids



## Bowling Center Facilities *Model Smoke-Free Policy*

**Subject:** Prohibition of smoking at *[Bowling Center Name]*.

**Purpose:** *[Bowling Center Name]* recognizes that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. As responsible citizens and a responsible business, this policy demonstrates our commitment towards a healthy environment for our customers, staff, and everyone who enters the bowling center.

**Scope of Policy:** Smoking is prohibited in all indoor areas of the *[Bowling Center Name]*. This includes *[list specifics such as restrooms, arcade, restaurant/bar/grill, entryways]*.

**Implementation:** The bowling center will post appropriate signage and notify customers and staff about this policy. Staff will enforce the policy and ask violators to comply. Non-compliance will result in staff requesting the violator to leave the premises. If the violator refuses to leave, the staff may contact local authorities.

**Effective Date:** This policy statement is effective immediately upon the date of adoption *[or choose a date]*.

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Bowling Center Owner/Manager

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Date

**Customize the above sample policy with the details of your bowling center. Promote your smoke-free policy right away to your employees and customers. Use the tips below to plan your transition to becoming a smoke-free facility.**

### We're Ready to go Smoke-Free...Now What?

- 1) **Reach Out.** Contact your county public health department or a local smoke-free coalition. They may be able to help you hold a smoke-free event, as well as adopt, implement, and promote a smoke-free policy.
- 2) **Hold an Event.** Go smoke free for a night, a weekend, or a week. Advertise your smoke-free event to attract customers who are interested in bowling at a smoke-free center. Invite families, youth groups, and community organizations to attend. During the event, gather comments from the attendees on what they think of smoke-free bowling.
- 3) **Create a Policy.** A written policy, like the one above, can help you explain your decision to go smoke free. Think of a policy as signing a promise to your customers and employees to protect their health and well-being.
- 4) **Announce your Decision.** Tell your employees and customers that you are going smoke free on a certain date. People are less likely to be confused and are more likely to abide by the policy if they understand what's going on.
- 5) **Post Signs.** Permanent signage, flyers on the doors, and window stickers are great ways to let your customers know that they are entering a smoke-free environment. Create your own signs, or download and print signs from TFYR at [www.ansrmn.org](http://www.ansrmn.org).
- 6) **Advertise and Celebrate!** Let new customers know that you are smoke free! You can hold a smoke-free grand re-opening; create an ad or press release for local media; or see if you can hang signs in local businesses, day cares, senior centers, and schools.
- 7) **Don't Forget the Web.** If you have a Web site, announce that you are smoke free on your home page. Also post your center on Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation's online list of smoke-free bowling centers at [www.ansrmn.org](http://www.ansrmn.org)
- 8) **Congratulate Yourself!** You have spared the lungs of your customers, your employees, and yourself from the harms of secondhand smoke!

Please consider striking out the harmful effects of smoking in your bowling center. If you have questions about how to make your facilities smoke free, contact TFYR or your local health department. To add your smoke-free bowling center to this list, contact TFYR.



## 100% Smoke-Free Bowling Centers in Minnesota

City	Center Name	Address	Phone	Web site
Andover	Andover Lanes	13633 Martin St. NW	763-754-8000	www.andoverlanes.com
Blackduck	Blackduck Bowling Lanes	233 Summit Ave. SW	218-835-6620	
Bloomington	AMF Southtown Lanes	7941 Southtown Center	952-888-9248	www.amf.com/southtownlanes
Bloomington	Lyn-Del Lanes	9336 Lyndale Ave. S	952-881-4232	
Brooklyn Park	Brunswick Zone	7545 Brooklyn Blvd	763-503-2695	www.bowlbrunswick.com
Byron	Byron Lanes	501 Frontage Rd. NW	507-775-6000	
Eden Prairie	Brunswick Zone	12200 Singletree Ln.	952-941-0445	www.bowlbrunswick.com
Greenwood	Country Club Lanes	5601 Manitou Rd.	952-474-5959	
Hutchinson	Hutch Bowl	1150 Highway 7 W	320-587-2352	
Mankato	Jerry Dutler's Bowl	1247 Range St.	507-387-3439	www.jerrydutlersbowl.com
Mankato	Victory Bowl	202 S Victory Dr.	507-387-7991	
Minneapolis	Bryant Lake Bowl	810 W Lake St.	612-825-3737	www.bryantlakebowl.com
Minneapolis	Elsie's	721 NE Marshall St.	612-378-9701	www.elsies.com
Minneapolis	Goldy's Gameroom (On U of M Campus)	300 Washington Ave. SE	612-624-8722	www.coffman.umn.edu/goldys
Minneapolis	Memory Lanes	2520 26th Ave. S	612-721-6211	www.memorylanesmpls.com
Minneapolis	Nokomis Lanes	4040 Bloomington Ave.	612-827-1781	
Minneapolis	Skylanes Bowling	5019 34 Ave. S	612-722-6016	
Morris	Crystal Lanes and Entertainment	808 West Fifth St.	320-589-0232	
Rochester	Colonial Lanes	1828 14th St. NW	507-289-2341	
Rochester	Recreation Lanes	2810 North Broadway	507-228-2601	http://reclanes.2gobowl.com
St. Paul	Midway Pro Bowl	1556 University Ave. W	651-646-1396	www.midwayprobowl.com
St. Paul	Minnehaha Lanes	955 Seminary Ave.	651-488-7208	www.minnehahalanes.com
St. Paul	Ran-Ham	490-1/2 Hamline Ave.	651-698-0252	
St. Paul	St. Bernard's Lanes (In St. Bernard's School)	170 Rose Ave. W	651-489-2677	
St. Paul	St. Francis Bowling Center	426 S. Osceola Ave.	651-228-1169	www.sf-sj.net/parish/bowling.htm
St. Paul	Sun Ray Lanes	2245 Hudson Rd.	651-735-3222	www.sunraylanes.com
St. Paul	Gopher Spot (on U of M Campus)	2017 Buford Ave.	612-625-5246	www.spsc.umn.edu/gopherspot
Stewartville	Stewartville Bowl	101 10th St. NW	507-533-8330	

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