

Jodi McKay

Minister for Tourism
Minister for the Hunter
Minister for Science and Medical Research
Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer)



Embargoed until Saturday 20 June, 2009

Smokers to be reminded of tough new legislation coming into effect

Billboard and print advertisements reminding drivers and smokers of tough new tobacco regulations coming into effect on July 1 will commence this weekend.

Minister Assisting the Minister for Health (Cancer) Jodi McKay said the advertisements will feature in Sunday newspapers, on the back of buses and on billboards throughout Sydney and NSW.

"The advertisements will hammer home the message that from July 1, drivers and smokers will be banned from smoking in cars when a child or passenger under the age of 16 is present," Ms McKay said.

"Any driver or passenger who is caught violating this new law could attract a \$250 on-the-spot fine from NSW Police.

"This new regulation strengthens our commitment to protecting children from the harmful effects of tobacco smoke and decreasing their exposure to tobacco products."

Spokesperson for the Protecting Children from Tobacco coalition Stafford Sanders welcomed the new advertisements and said NSW is protecting those most vulnerable from second hand smoke.

"Exposure to second hand smoke greatly increases the risk of childhood asthma and can lead to an increased risk of lower respiratory tract infections such as pneumonia and bronchitis as well as coughing and wheezing," Mr Sanders said.

"Being in a car or a confined space with a smoker for even a short period of time can be detrimental to a child's health."

Ms McKay said NSW Health has recently surveyed public opinion regarding the new tobacco regulations with encouraging results.

"Results showed that over 80 per cent of people surveyed support the new law of banning smoking in cars with children less than 16 years of age present," Ms McKay said.

"80 per cent of respondents who smoke also support the regulations protecting children from the harms of second hand tobacco smoke."

Ms McKay said the regulations place NSW as the Australian leader in tobacco control.

"While other jurisdictions have some of these reforms in place, no other state or territory has the strong and responsible package NSW has introduced.

"We refuse to be complacent about tobacco control, particularly the use of tobacco products around children."

Ms McKay said smoking continues to be the greatest single cause of premature death in NSW killing over 5,000 people and costing taxpayers over \$10 billion every year.

“\$600,000 is spent each day on hospital bed costs alone before any medical or other health care treatment is provided,” Ms McKay said.

Under the new laws to apply from 1 July 2009:

- All tobacco products must be stored out of sight in shops. Retailers that employ more than 50 people will have six months to comply, and other retailers will have twelve months from 1 July 2009;
- A negative licensing scheme will be introduced for tobacco retailers – meaning shops that sell cigarettes to children or breach the regulations on other ways may be stopped from selling tobacco;
- Cigarette vending machines will only be allowed in licensed venues restricted to over 18s, must be operated by staff intervention and will be subject to tobacco product display bans;
- Tobacco products will be removed from all shopper loyalty programs;
- Tobacco will be restricted to a single point of sale in all retail outlets;
- Smoking in cars with passengers under the age of 16 present will be banned and attract a \$250 on-the-spot fine;
- Advertising tobacco products, selling tobacco products to minors and the sale of tobacco products without health warnings will be met with significantly increased fines. Advertising and tobacco promotion offences by corporations in particular, will now attract maximum fines of \$660,000 for a first offence and \$1.1 million for subsequent offences (previously this figure was \$44,000).



KIDS ON BOARD

No smoking in cars with kids from July 1... it's the law!

It will cost you a \$250 fine.

NSW HEALTH 

(Sample advertisements that will be seen around Sydney and NSW from this weekend – larger hi-res images are available on request)