

Miami-Dade County Tobacco Control Newsletter

"The knowledge that cigarettes contain radiation is disturbing today, but would have been even more unsettling to Americans in the midst of the Cold War-mindset of the 1950s and 1960s."

- Cheryl Healton
CEO of the American Legacy Foundation



Decades of Secrets: Radioactive Substance in Cigarettes

A recent study of historical documents revealed that tobacco companies knew that a radioactive substance, polonium-210, was contained in cigarettes. Scientists from the University of California, Los Angeles, reviewed 27 previously unanalyzed documents and found that tobacco companies knew about the radioactive content as early as 1959.

Throughout the 1960s, the companies studied polonium and knew that it caused "cancerous growths" in the lungs of smokers. Researchers from the company were able to calculate the amount of radiation that a smoker would ingest over a 20 year period.

In 1980, it was found that a process called "acid washing" removes up to 99 percent of polonium-210 from tobacco. Tobacco companies declined to utilize this process because it would "cost too much." However, the document review revealed that the tobacco industry avoided the acid wash process because it would alter the nicotine in the plants, and make it less able to deliver the "instant nicotine rush" that smokers crave. Although this knowledge has been made available, Philip Morris USA does not use acid washing on their products.

Over the course of a year, a one-and-a-half-pack-a-day smoker can expose themselves to radiation equivalent to 300 chest e-rays. The radiation particles can hang around for decades, and are emitted through cigarette smoke.

To view the complete story, [Tobacco Companies Knew of Radiation in Cigarettes, Covered It Up](#), please visit <http://abcnews.go.com> and for tobacco cessation resources or information on how to quit, please contact the [Florida Quitline at 1-877-U-CAN-NOW](#).

Inside this issue:

- 1 Decades of Secrets: Radioactive Substance in Cigarettes
- 2 Miami-Dade: Winston Tower Tenant Objects Exposure to Secondhand Smoke
- 3 Guidelines for Comprehensive Local Tobacco Programs

Upcoming Events:

November 28, 2011
Tobacco-Free Workgroup
Partnership Meeting

December 19, 2011
Tobacco-Free Workgroup
Training

Miami-Dade County Health Department
Office of Community Health and Planning
18255 Homestead Avenue
Miami, FL 33157
(305) 278-0442
www.healthymiamidade.org



Miami-Dade: Winston Tower Tenant Objects Exposure to Secondhand Smoke

Now that smoking has been banned at the workplace and restaurants, anti-tobacco activists are hoping to get that same treatment for their homes. Currently, there are no regulations set in place to ban smoking in multi-unit housing. However, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development urges public housing officials to go smoke free.

Ernestine Gray, a Deerfield Beach Housing Authority commissioner says that "smoking is bad for your health," but believes that it should be up to the smokers to quit. The Deerfield Beach housing authorities are working towards making at least parts of their complexes smoke free.

In Miami-Dade County, public health officials are working with residents in Winston Towers condominiums who would like their building to be smoke free, but it proves to be difficult because residents own their units. Arlene Koenig, a Winston Towers unit owner and cancer survivor says her home shouldn't be subjected to smoke coming from others, whether it is coming from outdoors or through the bathroom vents. "The board, their ignoring it," says Koenig. "We had to close the bathroom door, the smell was so intense," she said. "It was like a toxic waste dump. You don't want to breathe this stuff into you."

The Miami-Dade County Health Department and the Tobacco-Free Workgroup continue to educate and bring awareness of the dangers of secondhand smoke to tenants and management. In providing this information, we hope for one day to establish a policy that creates smoke-free multi-unit dwellings throughout Miami-Dade County.

To view the complete story, [Your home is your castle except if you want to smoke](#), please visit the Sun Sentinel at www.sun-sentinel.com. For information on tobacco prevention, contact the Miami-Dade County Health Department's Tobacco Prevention Program at (305) 278-0442.



TOBACCO-FREE WORKGROUP MEETING

Monday, November 28, 2011
9:00AM – 11:00AM

Miami-Dade County Health
Department
Beacon Center
8323 NW 12th Street, Suite 212
Miami, FL 33126

For more information about the Tobacco-Free Workgroup and how to get involved, please visit: www.healthymiamidade.org.

Guidelines for Comprehensive Local Tobacco Control Programs

The National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO) Guidelines describes an integrated programmatic tobacco control structure and provides the recommended level of investment to end the epidemic of tobacco use. The individual components of a comprehensive program must work together for effective tobacco control and NACCHO recommends that local health departments (LHD) fund the following components.

Best Practices Components

1. Community Intervention – for meaningful change to occur in the way tobacco products are marketed, sold, and used, community involvement is essential.
2. Health Communication – communication campaigns are effective at reducing tobacco consumption.
3. Cessation Intervention – cessation interventions offer the quickest and largest short-term public health benefit compared to any other component of the comprehensive tobacco control program.
4. Program Administration and Management – each LHD requires dedicated personnel who can perform strategic planning, staffing, and fiscal management functions, and a well-trained work force that has the skills required to carry out program activities.
5. Surveillance and Evaluation – a successful program should assess the use of tobacco, local factors contributing to tobacco use, progress toward planned outcomes, and should report data that are useful to policy makers and the public.

Source: 2010 Program and Funding Guidelines for Comprehensive Local Tobacco Control Programs, National Association of County & City Health Officials