

## News Release

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**RELEASE:** For Immediate Release  
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### **May 20, 2010 - New No Smoking Law in Effect**

The San Luis Obispo City Council has approved a new No Smoking ordinance which goes into effect May 20, 2010. The United States Environmental Protection Agency has classified secondhand smoke as being in the most dangerous class of carcinogen, and the Council, as proactive leaders, has taken decisive action on this important public health issue. This new law extends current regulations to provide residents and visitors with protection from secondhand smoke in all outdoor places where the public may be present. This includes, but is not limited to, sidewalks, parking lots, recreation areas, outdoor dining areas and within 20 feet of any enclosed area where smoking is prohibited.

This ordinance expands on the groundbreaking law passed by the Council in June 1990, which made San Luis Obispo the first municipality in the world to ban smoking from all indoor places open to the public. After considerable input from citizens and local community groups, the City Council worked hard to strike a balance between the needs of smokers, and those of non-smokers to breathe smoke-free air.

Additionally, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board requires the City to reduce the environmental impact from human activities into the local creek systems. Cigarette filters and plastic wraps from cigarette packages are not biodegradable. When carelessly discarded, they can make their way through storm drains into creeks, leaking dangerous chemicals. They also present a danger to the City's natural resources and wildlife as cigarette filters have been mistaken for food by fish, birds, and other animals, exposing them to harmful plastic and toxic chemicals. By removing tobacco use from parks, recreation facilities, trails and open spaces, the City is ensuring a cleaner environment for residents, visitors and local wildlife and eliminating considerable cost to taxpayers for cleaning up tobacco related debris.

