



## **MMWR Highlights: Impact of a Smoking Ban on Restaurant and Bar Revenues — El Paso, Texas, 2002**

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### **Background**

- The Office of the Surgeon General and the U.S. Task Force on Community Preventive Services have concluded that the most effective method for reducing secondhand smoke exposure is the establishment of smokefree environments.
- Smoke-free indoor air ordinances protect employees and customers from secondhand smoke exposure, which is associated with increased risks for heart disease and lung cancer in adults and respiratory disease in children.
- As of January 2004, five states (California, Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, and New York) and 72 municipalities in the United States had passed laws that prohibit smoking in almost all workplaces, restaurants, and bars.

### **El Paso Study**

- On January 2, 2002, the city of El Paso, Texas, implemented an ordinance banning smoking in all public places and workplaces, including restaurants and bars.
- To assess whether the El Paso smoking ban affected restaurant and bar revenues, sales tax and mixed-beverage tax data were analyzed during the 12 years preceding and 1 year after the smoking ban was implemented.
- Restaurant and bar revenues account for approximately 10% of total retail revenues in El Paso, Texas, and this percentage showed that no statistically significant changes in restaurant and bar revenues occurred after the smoking ban was implemented on January 2, 2002.
- These findings are consistent with the results of studies in other municipalities that determined smoke-free indoor air ordinances had no effect on restaurant revenues.
- Despite claims that these laws might reduce alcoholic beverage revenues, mixed-beverage revenue analyses also indicate that sales of alcoholic beverages were not affected by the El Paso smoking ban.