

**THE EPA ETS RISK ASSESSMENT:  
IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WORKPLACE AND SOCIAL SETTINGS**

Following release of the ETS risk assessment, public officials and anti-smoking organizations have claimed that the report provides support for -- and in fact necessitates -- severe restrictions on smoking in workplaces, restaurants and other public areas. In fact, the risk assessment does not even consider data relating to ETS exposures in these settings, and therefore has very little relevance to the public smoking debate.

- The EPA ETS risk assessment is based solely on studies of nonsmokers married to smokers, and therefore presumably exposed to ETS at home.

**Workplace Exposure**

- The risk assessment provides no analysis at all of exposures occurring in the workplace, although 14 epidemiologic studies addressing this issue -- including many from the U.S. -- have been published in the scientific literature.
- This research provides no support for the suggestion that smoking should be banned. In fact, of 14 studies conducted specifically on workplace exposure, 12 report no statistically significant increase in risk.

**Restaurant Exposure**

- No epidemiologic studies have been conducted on ETS exposure specifically in restaurants, so claims that the ETS risk assessment supports restaurant smoking restrictions or bans are totally unsupportable.
- A number of studies have attempted to quantify exposure to ETS in restaurants, and most have reported extremely low exposures. One study estimates that a restaurant employee would require nearly 200 hours of continuous exposure to be exposed to the nicotine equivalent of a single cigarette.
- Restaurant patrons and employees would be exposed to many of the constituents of ETS regardless of restaurant smoking policies, since cooking equipment and processes generate the same products of combustion. Claims that ETS generates all or even most of the indoor air constituents found in restaurants are demonstrably wrong.