

## Policy Tip Sheet - Compliance

### Responses for when people say, “It won’t work” or “You’ll never be able to enforce it.”

This argument is often made as a simplistic reaction to change. The same arguments were made a decade ago when campuses wanted to prohibit smoking in the residence halls. As it turns out, that policy works and campuses are able to enforce it. This new movement should be no different.

Campuses should focus less on enforcement (the punishment when someone does not comply with the policy) and more on ensuring compliance. This means that you want to gain campus support with the policy before it is implemented. Conducting thorough education on the new policy prior to implementation is the key.

Consistently, we have seen campuses, communities and states that educate well on a new policy tend to have fewer enforcement issues. The new policy becomes as common as a traffic law. Those that rush through the process typically have more problems.

When talking with people, show them what the various phases will be and when those will occur. Then, show how other campuses have effectively implemented similar policies.

Example of phases: September – education on the new policy; October – cessation programs launch; November – information on policy sent to campus community and neighbors; January – policy begins

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Americans for Non-Smokers’ Rights (ANR) provides a list of common tactics used by the Tobacco Industry for countering new tobacco policies and creating a media firestorm. This tactic, in particular, can help you address the compliance issue.

Tobacco Industry Tactic: Focus media attention on isolated violations or organized noncompliance--don't acknowledge high rates of compliance.

TI Sound Bite: This will be an enforcement nightmare.

Advocate's Sound Bite: "Local smoke-free air laws have very high rates of compliance. Most people understand the purpose of the laws and abide by their provisions. It's insulting, particularly to smokers and business owners, to claim that an isolated violation is indicative of everyone's behavior."

Facts:

- It is insulting for the tobacco industry to imply that the majority of business owners and smokers have no respect for the democratic process or are not law-abiding citizens.
- Smoke-free ordinances are generally self-enforcing, especially if there has been an effective public education campaign conducted, the law is well written, and the enforcement agency is committed to both the goals of the ordinance and working with affected businesses.

Source: <http://www.no-smoke.org/document.php?id=241>