



Community Inventory For Clean Indoor Air Policy

Simply put, a community inventory is a look at the community from an organizer's perspective. From that perspective the person gathering information on a community will do their research in both a formal and informal manner. The inventory must be conducted in a neutral manner and be free of any preconceived notions. During the inventory process the group of individual should keep good records of both formal and informal information collected.

Examples of formal information would include the data on population size, the type of government, names and addresses of city council members and other information. Informal information will come from conversations and interviews with contacts. Examples of informal information include who is perceived to have political power, who is the most influential person in the community, who is the most influential person on the council, who are most likely supporter of the campaign, who are most likely to be our opponents and similar information.

The community inventory is also a way to improve your knowledge and understanding of the community. As you do the inventory, care and thoughtfulness are key.

Decision makers

Who is the ultimate group (City Council, County Commissioners, Restaurant Association, etc.) that will make the decision?

- ❖ Profile of the members of the Council *or Commission*
- ❖ Profile of the Mayor or Chief Administrative Officer
- ❖ Profile of the members of the Board of Directors
- ❖ *Does the local decision making entity have self-governing powers?*
- ❖ *Is there an existing health board, commission or committee that any health regulation may have to be endorsed or supported by?*

City/County Staff

What staff will be involved or impacted?

Health Department Staff: Who will be involved?

Who will we need to work with?

Who are our allies?

Who may not support the ordinance?

History

Has there been a previous effort to have smoke free indoor public places or workplaces? Was there an effort to pass an ordinance?

Were the efforts successful? Are there existing ordinances? Who helped pass them and who enforces them?

Tobacco Free Coalition Members

Is there a citizens' group?

Who is the chair or lead contact?

Are they up-to-date on Clean Air Ordinances?

If not, what needs to be done to bring them up to speed?

Media Contacts

- ❖ Newspapers: Has the local paper editorialized against the tobacco industry? Who is on the editorial board?
- ❖ Radio: Is there a local talk radio show? Find out what you can about the host, station, etc. Is there a public radio station?
- ❖ Television: *Do your commercial television stations feature interview programs with local citizens? What is the cost of advocacy ads? Is there a public television station that offers time slots for local issue advocates?*

Community Activists

Are there locally known, health oriented activists in the city?

Call locally based environmental and social justice groups. Can they suggest folks who may be interested in helping with this campaign?

Locations For Possible News Conferences

Consider libraries, fronts of hospitals, health clinics, city hall, community centers, senior citizen centers, etc. Make notes about rules for reserving space, size of the space, who the contact is, their phone number and anything else that may be helpful for you to know in advance of the news conference.

Supportive Doctors, Respiratory Therapists, Nurses, and others

Health Professionals: Is there a local member of the heart, lung, or cancer associations who would be a good spokesperson? How about Physicians for Social Responsibility?

Youth groups or teacher activists may want to be involved in the issue.

Check local PTA members for anti-tobacco activists.

Consider seeking out supportive restaurant owners and identify the adversarial ones.

Tobacco Industry/Tobacco Use Defenders

Who would they be in your community?

- ❖ Stores that sell cigarettes?
- ❖ Smokers' rights groups?
- ❖ The Chamber of Commerce?

After completing the inventory, each community will know whether or not they have self-governing powers. Self-governing powers allow a city or county to implement local ordinances. If your community has self-governing powers, it is possible to have a secondhand smoke ordinance. If not, then your coalition must pursue other options in your community to reduce exposure.