

Anatomy of a Local Ordinance Campaign - Galen Ellis (Contra Costa County, Calif., health department)

Note: The session began with Robin Hobart with Americans for Non-Smokers Rights discussing the importance of implementing anti-smoking ordinances at the local level, where she said tobacco industry is not well-organized.

Contra Costa has developed a model ordinance that calls for 100% ban on smoking in the workplace, restaurants and public places, as well as a ban on vending machines and a ban on sampling and giveaways.

Why the focus on local ordinances:

- 1.) Local ordinances institutionalize tobacco control efforts -- after Prop. 99 funds dry up, these ordinances will be in place;
- 2.) A local ordinance is a easy way to get public attention through controversy. After an ordinance is enacted, it sends a message that tobacco use in public places is not acceptable;
- 3.) Ordinance efforts provide opportunity to mobilize community to advocate health efforts. Involves people who might not otherwise be. Also educates people on lobbying techniques, such as how to use the media and the political process.

Model consists of:

- 1.) Coalition building -- Includes key opinion leaders, policymakers, community leaders, natural allies such as the American Lung Association, as well as potential allies in various civic, business, union and law enforcement organizations. Average citizens also should be involved in the coalition.
- 2.) Develop media readiness plan: Media training, development of media soundbites, creating media events.
- 3.) Coalition mobilization -- Develop programs such as a slide show on the tobacco industry's advertising techniques targeted at kids, which will enrage the public and get them ready to take action.
- 4.) Advocacy training -- How to testify and prepare for the tobacco industry's counterattack.
- 5.) Reconnaissance work -- Assign a person to monitor opinion of politicians, find out what the tobacco industry is doing, who the tobacco front groups are, who has been approached by the industry, who is supportive in the community, as well as

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an education program for the business community in order to neutralize tobacco propoganda (cited the "Beverly Hills Restaurant" myth as example).

- 6.) Unleashing the community -- Implementing a letter-writing campaign, mobilizing the media, organizing people to testify.

Noted that the model doesn't address the following:

- 1.) Cities often resent efforts by the county to ban smoking because they perceive it as not their agenda, so there is a need to work with city council members to get them involved.
- 2.) Political pressure to get ordinance out often doesn't give time to organize.
- 3.) New city council members often are influenced by the tobacco industry to weaken smoking ordinances.

Have learned that:

- 1.) Coalitions don't adapt to quickly changing environment and must be decentralized and formed at local levels.
- 2.) A health department taking an advocacy role is unusual and the community can be distrustful and resist.

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