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Sun Prairie Diner Prepares To Go Smoke Free

Owner Supports Statewide Ban

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SUN PRAIRIE, Wis. -- July of 2010 might be the time that Wisconsin becomes completely smoke free and that possibility has some area businesses gearing up for some big changes.

One of those businesses that would be affected by the smoking ban -- targeted to go into effect on July 5, 2010 -- would be the Prairie Diner in Sun Prairie.

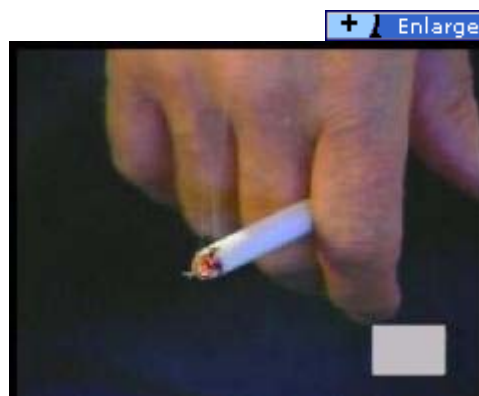
"I've never liked it," said patron Sally Mortensen of the smoke.

Customers like Mortensen come back to the Prairie Diner for the food, but the food is served along with cigarette smoke.

"Everything smells like smoke," said Mortensen. "I smell like smoke when I leave."

The Sun
Prairie
diner will
go

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smoke-free in August when all of Dane County does. The entire state might follow suit less than a year later, WISC-TV reported.

"I'm all for it," said Mortensen. "It's long overdue."

"I think it will probably improve," said diner owner Allen Heller. "But we have to wait and see."

Heller said he's lost some customers to the smoke, but he's glad to see the smoking ban go statewide.

"That way it's done all over the state not just one area," said Heller.

"When people smoke they don't realize that people have sinus problems and they're re-infected every single time they go out," said customer Toni Raichel, who supports the ban.

But not everyone agrees.

"I was a trucker," said diner regular and smoker Allen Barry. "I started coming here about 1970. I think it should be left up to each business to decide."

"The government keeps telling us what to do and what I put in my body is my business, it shouldn't be the government telling me," said Barry. "That's my philosophy on that."

Owners only hope that once the smoke clears that even customers who disagree will keep coming back.

"The price, \$4.95 for breakfast, buy a steak, you can't beat it," said Barry.

[Smoke Free Wisconsin](#) said they're gearing up for the proposal to go through both houses on Wednesday, but

not without additional changes.

"We know some legislators are talking about introducing amendments to make exemptions for certain types of businesses and we would encourage them not to do that," said Smoke Free Wisconsin's Maureen Busalacchi. "Every worker deserves the right to breathe clean air."

Under the current smoking ban agreement, only existing cigar and tobacco bars would be exempt.

State lawmakers will discuss if workplaces with few employees could also get an exemption.

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