

HALES CORNERS

Village seems ready for **smoke-free** legislation

Managers OK with ban if it's statewide

By **JOHN NEVILLE**
jneville@cniinow.com

Lighting up at the corner bar or coffee shop might be snuffed out this year in Hales Corners and other Wisconsin communities.

State legislators will consider such a ban later this year. The issue of **smoke-free** eateries and taverns has been de-

bated for years but now seems closer than ever to becoming reality.

A survey of village residents last year by the Hales Corners Public Health Department says nearly 80 percent of respondents support legislation for **smoke-free** workplaces, which would include restaurants and bars.

Resident Shirley Klejsmit, 70, said a no-smoking policy is fine with her.

"I stopped smoking 22

years ago. ... Smoke makes me nauseous," Klejsmit said as she enjoyed a cocktail recently at the Open Flame.

Klejsmit, who was a heavy smoker for more than 30 years, said she usually comes to the restaurant in the late afternoon before smokers descend for happy hour.

Managers not too worried

Interviews with Hales Corners restaurant managers suggest a transition to a smoke-



NOW Photo by Katie Derksen

Shirley Klejsmit, a longtime customer of Open Flame, Hales Corners, says she would be all for a **smoking ban** in Hales Corners restaurants.

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free environment will require an adjustment but likely will not slow business, at least in the long run.

Open Flame manager Laz Kautromanos said a **smoke-free** policy in restaurants and bars would work as long as it is part of a statewide policy.

"I know restaurant owners in Kenosha that banned smoking and guess what happened to their business? It plummeted," Kautromanos said. "They're going out of business because their customers went four miles down the road to another place that allows

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BY THE NUMBERS

1,500

questionnaires sent to Hales Corners residents last year

39 percent

response rate to survey

79 percent

respondents who support a statewide **smoke-free** law

90 percent

respondents who prefer **smoke-free** dining regardless of their position on non-smoking legislation

Source: Hales Corners Health Department