

## **PENNSYLVANIA ENACTS STATE-WIDE SMOKING BAN**

On July 13, 2008 the Pennsylvania Legislature passed a law entitled the “Indoor Clean Air Act” which is essentially a state-wide ban on smoking effective September 12, 2008. This Act is part of a continuing trend across the country where cities and states have previously passed similar bans on smoking in public places. Philadelphia, New York City, and Boston have had similar bans in place for some time now. Additionally, surrounding states such as New Jersey, New York, Delaware, Connecticut, and Massachusetts all have bans and are just a few of 23 states in the United States that currently have fully enacted public smoking bans.

The Indoor Clean Air Act will prohibit smoking in all “public places” across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (with some exceptions). All owners and operators of affected facilities/buildings must post signs stating that this is a non-smoking facility (or smoking is allowed if they fit into an exception). Business owners or facility operators found in violation of the law can be subject to fines from the Department of Health if reported or discovered upon inspection. Individuals are also subject to fines if they are found and reported to be smoking in a public place where the owner has posted the ban properly.

*This article was authored by Keith W. Strohl, Esquire of the Steckel & Stopp Law Firm with offices at Main Street and Walnut Street, Slatington; Schnecksville and Northampton which has been serving the needs of the Northern Lehigh Valley area for over sixty years.*