

## Bar owners question the need for smoking ban in Wahpeton

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By: [Todd Kurtz](#), WDAY 1

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Some people in Wahpeton are pulling for their city to be one of the front runners. Supporters say it makes sense for Wahpeton, because it's a border city to Minnesota which already follows a state-wide smoking ban. The group backing a North Dakota ban has a 5 year plan and a 2 year goal of 5 more cities adopting a smoking ban.

"We know that smoke free policy does save medical dollars and does save lives so we hope that people will show their support."

Not everyone is "for" a smoking ban. Bar owners are asking, "do we really need a smoking ban here?" WDAY 6 reporter Todd Kurtz has our story.

It's a small business owner's worst nightmare, regulations on their business. Owners and managers at the Sportsman's Lounge and Firehouse Pub say when Minnesota passed a state-wide smoking ban; Wahpeton bars reaped the benefits...

"Business did boost a little bit, especially during the colder months, people don't like smoking outside."

"Talk with most bar owners in Minnesota across the board they are down 35 percent in sales."

Owners and managers say smokers won't sit and stay. They say they wish it was a decision for the bar owners, because non smokers do have options in the area.

"You have establishments in Wahpeton that are smoke free you've got them across the river in Breckenridge that are smoke free; you have a choice to go where you want."

Bar owners and managers say with so many neighboring towns, the smoking ban would just push business and more tax dollars outside city limits.

"8 establishments within a ten mile radius, which the people will go to."

Owners and managers say they've seen a ban coming and will deal with it, but don't want it to be exclusive to Wahpeton. They want the ban to be state-wide.

"I figured it should be up to the people to vote it in, but ya know if it does happen ya know there's nothing a guy can really do about it."

City commissioners have spoke about adopting the ban, but nothing has been proposed, as of now.