

Toxic Casinos...The Great Cover up

Guest Editorial

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Las Vegas, Nevada - As far as the casino gaming industry is concerned, it all started back in 1991. According to the Las Vegas Sun, the first scent dispensing systems in Las Vegas were installed at the Mirage by a company called AromaSys. Since then the marketing of scent spread like wildfire up and down the strip and several other scent companies joined the fray. Soon after, many tribal casinos all over the United States were pumping scent into their casinos. It was marketed as an aphrodisiac of sorts. People would stay longer and gamble more guaranteed the salespeople. In reality it was nothing more than a way to cover up, or mask the smell of tobacco smoke.



Gallon containers of this mysterious scent are hooked up to the air ducts that supply clean air back to the casino floor. The scent is pumped through the ducts down into the breathing zone.

Essential Oils the salespeople chanted when asked what's in those containers. What could be more invigorating than the wonderful smell of your own trademarked essential oil?

Unfortunately for the casino operators, the salespeople failed to leave them a copy of the MSDS sheets. In fact it is well

documented that in just about every case, the salespeople themselves were refused access to the MSDS sheets by their employers.

Normally if you were going to dispense gallons after gallons of a chemically laden liquid into the supply air duct of an occupied building that services thousands of people a day you would have to disclose that anywhere from 90 to 100% of these 'essential oils' you are injecting into the supply air duct are actually raw chemicals, some banned by the FDA. You say what?

It even gets worse. In a casino gaming application they are pumping scented chemicals into the breathing zone of a casino floor already full of VOC's and carcinogens from second hand tobacco smoke. Talk about creating a toxic soup. The customers come and go so their exposure is limited, but the employees who work the casino floor are slowly being poisoned.

Can you imagine working under these conditions 40 plus hours a week? Ken Valentino couldn't. Here is an excerpt from his [testimony](#) in front of the Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor, Carson City, Nevada...

"I was not aware of the problems caused by air fresheners until recently. We have lost quite a few people in the last five to six years to cancer, and many of them had thyroid cancer. Some people complain every day, because as soon as they step inside the property their noses are running or they are having problems breathing. We always talked about what we believed was causing everyone to feel bad here. I know I got cancer from it, and I have lost many of my co-workers to cancer."

Karen Smith's testimony had the same ringtone.

"I have suffered from the negative health consequences of aromatic air fresheners. I am a nonsmoker who has developed asthma, migraines, and countless respiratory infections. The use of air fresheners does not actually clean or freshen the air but instead adds extra chemicals to the air. The addition of these chemicals causes migraine headaches, vertigo, nausea, and breathing problems. I have witnessed all of these reactions to aromatic air fresheners among my coworkers in the casino. At least five other beverage employees I work with have also developed the same symptoms."

Michele De Fazio's testimony was just as damning.

"The FDA has allowed a chemical called methylene chloride, which is banned, to be used in fragrances or air fresheners in a proprietary blend. When a person walks by based on general air currents, sooner or later that scent is going to disperse. When you have it constantly introduced through the ventilation system there is no abatement. You are constantly exposed to it. What most of the public does not understand is that fragrances are not tested for safety, or are required to be, under federal law. They assume the manufacturer has tested the fragrances."

How could something as blatant as this go undetected over the last twenty years? Good question. We can probably blame a lot of people but you have to start with the companies that make this witch's brew, then the FDA that allows these companies to cover up the chemicals they use under the 'proprietary blend' trade secret charade. Surely the companies that buy these products from the perfumers and sell to the casino gaming industry have read the MSDS sheets. These are just a few of the warnings on these products taken from actual MSDS sheets published by ScentAir Technologies. [MSDS Sheet Excerpts](#)

In this typical MSDS sheet, ScentAir basically states that Coconut Almond is full of chemicals but they are not required to disclose them because they are trade secrets. They go on to tell you that no health hazard data exists for this product so be careful, it is known to be irritating to skin, eyes, mucous membranes, throat, and lungs. And oh by the way "breathing vapors may cause nausea, vomiting, dizziness, and loss of muscle coordination." Huh, you are pumping these chemicals into the breathing zone and then warning people not to breathe? [Coconut Almond MSDS Sheet](#)

It's hard for me to believe that the executives who manage casino gaming properties would spend thousands of dollars a month to purposely pump these chemicals into the breathing zone of the casino floor if they had any idea what they were doing. Would you let any immediate family member work 40 plus hours a week in a property full of tobacco carcinogens and scented chemicals? I don't think so. Opting to smell something is one thing, being forced to inhale it over extended periods of time is another.

If you can smell it you are ingesting it. If you can smell it, it will permeate your skin and eyes. Please read this carefully. You can find all the MSDS sheets and additional documentation here. [Toxic Casinos](#)

Additional sources of reference:



“Secret Chemicals: Laboratory tests commissioned by the Campaign for Safe Cosmetics revealed 38 secret chemicals in 17 name brand products, with an average of 14 secret chemicals per product. The chemicals in commercial fragrances are synthetic compounds derived from petroleum and natural gas, known as petrochemicals. On average, 80% of fragrance formulations are comprised of these chemicals and in some cases, 100% of a formula can be synthetic.”

Scents and senseless air toxins casino gaming... *“Scent-Air does not even provide their Las Vegas sales representative, Suzanne, with the relevant MSDS for the products she is promoting. Apparently, Scent-Air is paranoid about the “proprietary” blend of their ‘fragrances’ becoming public.”*

FRAGRANCE IN THE WORKPLACE IS THE NEW SECOND-HAND SMOKE

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“The parallels between second-hand smoke and synthetic fragrance use are many. At its core, both are battles over indoor air quality.”

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE AND LABOR

Testimony

Seventy-Sixth Session March 14, 2011

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Many of the chemicals in today's modern fragrances are listed on the EPA's Hazardous Waste List.

*It is difficult for some unsuspecting consumers to *believe* that today's synthetic fragrances are toxic and can even lead to disability and death. People are being duped by a multi-billion dollar industry that has no regard for human health and a government that condones it.*

The National Academy of Sciences reports that 95% of the chemicals used in fragrances today are synthetic compounds derived from petroleum, including known toxins capable of causing cancer, birth defects, central nervous system disorders and allergic reactions. We have been brainwashed by the industry to feel we must cover up our natural scents with toxic chemicals. You would think the government would protect people by attempting to regulate the industries that are causing harm; however, the cosmetic industry is self-regulated and isn't required to give formulations, test results, safety data or consumer complaints to the FDA.

Did you know that perfumes rank higher in causing asthma than second-hand tobacco smoke? Could the recent increase of lung cancer death rates of non-smokers be caused by man-made fragrances, considering how ubiquitous they are, and the fact they contain nearly 100 carcinogens?

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