Thirdhand Smoke Resource Center

Does smoking a pipe create thirdhand smoke?

The Short Answer

Thirdhand smoke is the chemicals left behind when someone smokes tobacco. Thirdhand smoke is unhealthy for people and pets. It can stick around for a long time in homes and cars. It gets into your body if you inhale, swallow, or touch the chemicals. Getting rid of it is really hard and can cost a lot of money.

Pipe tobacco smoke has many of the same harmful chemicals as cigarette smoke. Smoking a pipe creates secondhand smoke, which remains in spaces and becomes toxic thirdhand smoke residue. Like thirdhand smoke from cigarettes, thirdhand smoke from pipes sticks to and embeds in many surfaces, including clothes, furniture, walls, and household objects.

The Long Answer:

Thirdhand smoke is the chemical residue from tobacco smoke. It is also called “tobacco smoke residue” or “stale tobacco smoke.” The chemicals in thirdhand smoke are toxic to humans, especially children. It can linger for years in dust and on household surfaces. It can also become embedded in carpets, furniture, clothes, and building materials. It is difficult and expensive to remove.

Many people think that smoking a pipe is safer than smoking regular cigarettes, but pipe tobacco is also harmful to your health. People who smoke pipes have an increased risk of head, neck, liver, and lung cancer.
The secondhand smoke from smoldering tobacco in the bowl of a pipe and the smoke exhaled by the person smoking contain many of the same toxic chemicals as cigarette smoke, including nicotine. Exposure causes cancer in humans and is especially dangerous to pregnant women and young children.

Just like secondhand smoke from cigarettes, secondhand smoke from a pipe creates toxic thirdhand smoke residue that sticks to surfaces, clothes, carpets, furniture, and walls. Over time, toxic thirdhand smoke residue from pipe smoke builds up and becomes embedded in indoor environments.

Do you have more questions about the toxic legacy of tobacco smoke, how it affects human health, and what we can do about it? Learn more here.

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Sources:

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