

Tobacco-Free Parks Policy Implementation Guide

June 2011

Why do we need to do this?

Enjoying Healthy Park Environments – Tobacco-Free Policies for Parks and Recreation Facilities in King County

Tobacco-free parks and recreation areas promote health and wellness

Parks are highly valued environments in neighborhoods and communities that promote individual and community wellness. Making these environments tobacco-free makes sense and is in alignment with community norms. Leash laws and rules against drinking in public provide for comfortable and safe visits to parks – tobacco use should be added to this list.

Cigarette butts aren't just litter – they're dangerous. According to the Washington Department of Ecology, 480 million cigarette butts are littered in Washington State every year. Cigarette butts are not biodegradable and can take up to 15 years to decompose. During that time, they leach cadmium, arsenic, and other poisons into the soil. Discarded cigarettes are also the third leading cause of preventable outdoor fires. In 2008, approximately 60,000 outdoor fires in the U.S. were caused by tobacco. Cigarette butts may also be ingested by toddlers, pets, birds, and fish.

- Washington State Department of Ecology (2007, April 12). Statewide litter campaign focuses on dangerous litter behavior. www.ecy.wa.gov/news/2007news/2007-083.html
- Karter, Michael J. Fire Loss in the United States During 2009 National Fire Protection Association.
- Ahrens, Marty Brush, Grass, and Forest Fires August 2010 National Fire Protection Association.

Tobacco-free environments prevent kids from using tobacco and assists adults in quitting. Youth and children exposed to smoking and tobacco use are more likely to use tobacco products when they get older. Research shows prohibiting smoking in public places decreases the chances that kids will use tobacco products and supports adults in smoking less or stopping altogether.

- Wakefield, Melanie A., et al. Do Restrictions on Smoking at Home, at School and in Public Places Influence Teenage Smoking?

Secondhand smoke harms everyone. Children exposed to secondhand smoke are at an increased risk for acute respiratory problems, ear infections and asthma attacks. Exposure of adults to secondhand smoke has immediate adverse effects on the cardiovascular system and causes coronary heart disease and lung cancer. There is simply no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.

- *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke. The 2006 Surgeon General's Report on Smoking.*

Secondhand smoke can be harmful in outdoor settings. Under some conditions, according to research from Tufts University School of Medicine and Repace Associates, outdoor levels of tobacco smoke can be as high as indoor levels of secondhand smoke.

- Repace, James L. Fact Sheet: Outdoor Air Pollution from Secondhand Smoke

Why Tobacco-Free Park Policies are being adopted in King County

Most King County residents support tobacco-free parks and recreation policies.

The 2007 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Survey conducted by the Washington State Department of Health reports that a majority of King County residents (72%) support prohibiting smoking in outdoor public areas.

Tobacco-free policies reduce litter and maintenance costs.

High-activity areas in parks, public access areas, and rest areas accumulate more litter per acre each year than roadways do. Parks leaders who have implemented tobacco-free policies report a significant reduction in cigarette butts littering the grounds. This saves money and allows maintenance crews to focus on more important projects.

- Washington State Litter Study, May 2000

Tobacco-free and smoke-free parks are becoming a norm across Washington State.

More than twenty-five cities in twelve counties throughout Washington have already adopted policies promoting tobacco and smoke-free public outdoor areas.

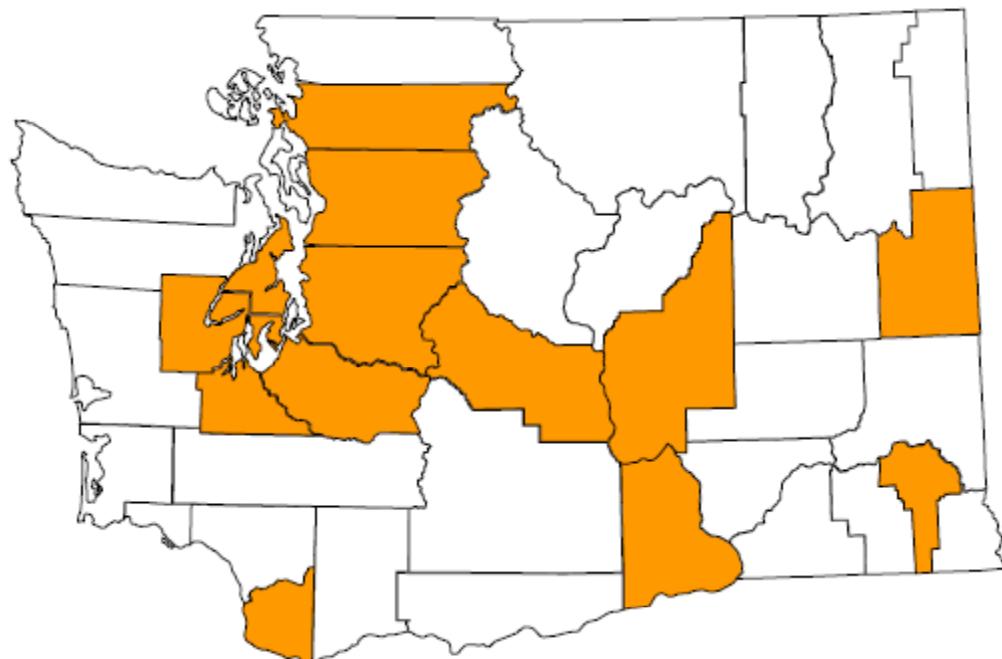
- Public Health in Action – Reducing Tobacco Exposure in Parks WADOH TPC Program Assessment and Evaluation

The time to act is now and King County is leading the way.

In the Summer of 2010, King County was awarded a national Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) grant. Diverse partners from across King County are working to create neighborhoods where it's safer to walk or bike, where schools and childcare settings are providing healthier foods and drinks, and where all King County residents can breathe smoke-free air.

Where do Tobacco-Free Park Policies currently exist in Washington State?

Parks across Washington State have adopted policies restricting or prohibiting tobacco use. The map below outlines all the parks in the state with identified tobacco policies.



Source: 2010 Washington State Department of Health, Tobacco Prevention and Control Program, Statewide Policy Outcomes Report on Reducing Tobacco in Parks. Full report including pages that provide more details about the processes that led to policy change in some communities can be found at, http://www.doh.wa.gov/tobacco/data_evaluation/Data/PolicyOutcome/WaPolicyReport.pdf

Where do Tobacco-Free Park Policies currently exist in Washington State?

County	Park	Year	Policy Detail
Benton	Kennewick Parks	2005	Smoke free playgrounds, 25' rule around perimeter. Signs posted at 26 playgrounds.
Benton	Richland Parks	2006	Smoke free playgrounds, 50' rule around perimeter. Signs posted at 20 playgrounds.
Benton	West Richland Parks	2007	Smoke free parks and spit tobacco is specifically prohibited.
Chelan-Douglas	Wenatchee City Parks	2010	City policy covers all parks. Signs posted at play areas, sports fields and wading pools.
Clark	Vancouver & Clark County Parks	2005	Smoke free playgrounds. Signs are posted at playgrounds and restrooms.
Clark	Battleground Parks	2007	Skate park section is smoke free and there are designated smoking areas.
Columbia	Dayton Parks	2010	Smoke free zones 25' around playgrounds, pools, athletic complex.
Garfield	Pioneer Park	2008	A pocket park in Pomeroy is tobacco-free, 25' rule.
Grant	Moses Lake Parks	2006	Rule covers playgrounds, ballparks, play fields, bleachers, restrooms, concession stand and any public gathering space.
King	Seattle Parks	2010	All tobacco use prohibited within 25' of other people, play areas and beaches.
Kitsap	Poulsbo	1999	
Kittitas	Ellensburg	2006	Rule covers playgrounds, restrooms, ball fields, beaches, and events.
Mason	Mason County Property	2006	All county-owned property is smoke free including parks and fairgrounds.
Pierce	Puyallup	2004	Entire park is smoke free, compliance is voluntary.
Pierce	Metro Parks	2009	Parks are smoke free and the policy includes enforcement provisions.
Pierce	Pierce County Parks	2009	Parks are smoke free and the policy includes enforcement provisions.
Skagit	Bakerview Park	2005	Entire park is smoke free, compliance is voluntary.
Skagit	Clear Lake Beach	2005	Entire park is smoke free, compliance is voluntary.
Skagit	Montgomery-Duban Headlands	2007	Entire park is smoke free, compliance is voluntary.
Skagit	Sharpe Park	2007	Entire park is smoke free, compliance is voluntary.
Snohomish	Marysville	2001	First park in Snohomish County to enact a policy.
Snohomish	Lake Stevens	2008	Smoke free policy includes enforcement provision and fine structure.
Snohomish	13 Snohomish Community Parks	2002-2007	Cities of Arlington, Granite Falls, Gold Bar, Monroe, Mukilteo, Index, Sultan, Snohomish, Everett, Lynnwood, Mountlake Terrace, Edmonds, Bothell
Spokane	Spokane Parks	2009	25' rule covers playgrounds, pools, restrooms, skate parks, and community events.
Thurston	Olympia	2005	Signs are posted at playgrounds.
Thurston	Tumwater	2007	Entire park is smoke free, compliance is voluntary.

Source: 2010 Washington State Department of Health, Tobacco Prevention and Control Program, Statewide Policy Outcomes Report on Reducing Tobacco in Parks.

100% Tobacco-Free Parks Model Policy

The following is a model policy for tobacco-free parks and beaches. The language below is intended to help draft and shape a policy that best suits your agency, whether that be through an ordinance, rule or resolution.

Please consult with your local legal advisors when considering how to adapt this policy.

Following the model policy are three examples of current tobacco-free policies in Washington State.

I. Guideline Statement

City and county parks and beaches are intended for the healthy enjoyment of all citizens, including children and youth.

II. Findings

- Parks and beaches are essential, health-promoting environments that can provide low to no cost opportunities for play, physical activity, greater family and community connection, stress reduction, and access to improved nutrition.
- Tobacco use in parks and beaches sends a dangerous message to youth that using tobacco is consistent with a healthy environment. Studies have shown that children and youth exposed to smoking and tobacco use are more likely to use tobacco products when they get older. Parents, leaders, coaches, and officials involved in recreation are role models for youth and can have a positive effect on the lifestyle choices they make.
- The Surgeon General has concluded that there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. The negative health consequences associated with exposure to secondhand smoke include increased risk of blood clots, heart attack, asthma attacks, respiratory problems, and eye and nasal irritation. Indeed, the Environmental Protection Agency has classified secondhand smoke as a Group A humans carcinogen, a category which includes only the most potent cancer causing agents, like benzene, vinyl chloride, asbestos, and arsenic.
- Cigarettes and other tobacco products, once consumed in public places, are often discarded on the ground requiring additional maintenance expenses, diminishing the beauty of recreational facilities, and posing a risk to toddlers and/or animals due to ingestion. Cigarette butts also take up to 15 years to decompose.
- Discarded tobacco products also pose a risk of fire. Matches and cigarettes account for 12 percent and 9 percent of outdoor fires, respectively.
- King County residents want tobacco and smoke-free parks and beaches. The majority of residents (72%) support prohibiting smoking in outdoor public areas. More than 25 cities in 12 counties throughout Washington have adopted policies promoting tobacco-free public outdoor areas.
- In the Spring of 2010, representatives from the King County Parks Directors Network agreed to a region-wide collaboration with Public Health through the federally funded Communities Putting Prevention to Work Initiative that would establish tobacco-free parks in at least 22 cities throughout King County.

100% Tobacco-Free Parks Model Policy

continued

III. Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the terms set forth below shall have the following meanings:

1. “Tobacco product” means any product containing tobacco in any form.
2. “Unapproved nicotine delivery product” means any product containing or delivering nicotine intended or expected for human consumption that has not been approved or otherwise certified for sale by the United States Food and Drug Administration as a tobacco use cessation product.
3. “Parks and beaches” means any property under the jurisdiction of the parks department.

IV. Tobacco-Free Parks Policy

1. The use of tobacco or unapproved nicotine delivery products is prohibited in all parks and beaches.
2. The Parks Department shall prominently post and maintain signage in all parks and beaches indicating that tobacco use is prohibited.
3. The Parks Department shall publicize the tobacco-free policy on its website and other promotional materials.
4. The Parks Department shall amend its permits and rental agreements (governing the private use of parks department facilities such as playing fields and shelters) to reflect that compliance with the tobacco-free park policy is a condition of the permit or lease.
5. Parks Department employees shall be authorized to enforce the tobacco-free policy by asking persons found to be in violation of the policy to discontinue tobacco use or leave the park or beach.

V. Effective Date

This policy is effective immediately upon the date of adoption.

Example: Tacoma Ordinance

ORDINANCE NO. 27841

BY REQUEST OF COUNCIL MEMBERS LADENBURG, STRICKLAND, AND TALBERT

AN ORDINANCE relating to the park code; amending Chapter 8.27 of the Tacoma Municipal Code, prohibiting smoking in all City parks.

WHEREAS the City's parks are intended for the healthy enjoyment of all citizens, including children and youth, and

WHEREAS Metro Parks Tacoma staff has reported that smoking and tobacco use in parks has resulted in litter of cigarette butts, cigar butts, and other tobacco-related waste, which studies have shown can cause environmental degradation and pose a health risk to children and animals, and

WHEREAS the City Council, through its Public Safety, Human Services and Education Committee, received testimony from representatives of the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department that smoking and tobacco use, including secondhand smoke, has been linked with the development of lung cancer, heart attack, low birth weight, bronchitis, pneumonia, asthma, chronic respiratory problems, and eye and nasal irritation, and

WHEREAS studies have shown that children and youth exposed to smoking and tobacco use are more likely to smoke when they get older, and

WHEREAS many parks in the City contain brush and trees, which can be combustible, particularly in the dry summer months, and the parks do not contain facilities for disposing of tobacco products and tobacco products that are not completely extinguished pose an increased risk of fire, and

WHEREAS, in spring 2009, Metro Parks Tacoma, along with Tacoma-Pierce County Public Health, requested that the Public Safety, Human Services and Education Committee ("Committee") examine the issue of a citywide ban of smoking in all public parks within the City limits of Tacoma in order to promote public health and safety, and

WHEREAS, on June 25, 2009, and August 13, 2009, the Committee discussed the item and deliberated on the policy objectives and the scope of the policy before deciding upon the policy goals of public health, litter concerns, and fire dangers in the ordinance, and

WHEREAS the Committee gave a "do pass" recommendation for the all-encompassing smoking ban in City parks,

WHEREAS, if implemented, the proposed ordinance will require "No Smoking" signage to be in place in order to be effective, and

WHEREAS the City will be responsible for all municipally owned park signage; Now, Therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF TACOMA:

Section 1. That Chapter 8.27 of the Tacoma Municipal Code is amended, as set forth in the attached Exhibit "A."

EXHIBIT "A"

8.27.085 Smoking in parks prohibited.

It is unlawful for any person to smoke or light cigars, cigarettes, tobacco, or other smoking material within a park. The Director or City Manager shall post signs in appropriate locations, prohibiting smoking in parks.

For the purposes of this section, "smoke" or "smoking" means the carrying, holding, or smoking of any kind of lighted pipe, cigar, cigarette, or any other lighted smoking equipment.

A violation of this section is a class 4 civil infraction \$25, not including statutory assessments. Such penalty is in addition to any other remedies or penalties provided by law.

Example: Mason County Rule

9.44.041 - Smoking in county parks or fairgrounds.

All county property, including county parks and fairgrounds, shall be designated nonsmoking areas.

County property does not include:

(1) Private vehicles and residences unless otherwise required by individual or group contracts with the county;

(2) County roads;

(3) Any person passing by or through county property while on a public sidewalk or public right-of-way has not intentionally violated this chapter.

(Ord. 91-06 Att. B (part), 2006).

Example: Tumwater Resolution

A RESOLUTION of the City Council of the City of Tumwater Washington urging park users to refrain from using tobacco products in all city owned park facilities

WHEREAS, tobacco related disease is the number one cause of death to Washington residents, killing more people than AIDS, alcohol, car, accidents, fires, illegal drugs, murders, and suicides combined; and

WHEREAS, the Environmental Protection Agency has classified secondhand smoke as a Group A human carcinogen and therefore concludes that secondhand smoke is a risk to non smokers; and

WHEREAS, there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke and even brief exposure can cause immediate harm; and

WHEREAS, cigarette butts pose a significant litter burden; they are the largest source of outdoor recreation trash in parks and the single most littered item in the world, reports from jurisdictions with tobacco policies in place indicate a dramatic reduction in litter and subsequently maintenance costs; and

WHEREAS, adults are often role models for young people, and adults who smoke set a bad example for youth; and

WHEREAS, it is in the City's interest and the interests of park users to be aware of the risks posed by secondhand smoke, and to acknowledge the desirability of adults providing good role models for kids; and

WHEREAS, approximately 80 percent of Thurston County residents do not smoke; and

WHEREAS, the City encourages the use of parks facilities in a safe and healthy manner, and the Parks and Recreation Department and City Council have recommended the installation of signage requesting voluntary compliance of park patrons not to smoke;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF TUMWATER AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. The Tumwater Parks and Recreation Department is hereby requested to install signage at all parks owned by the City of Tumwater urging park users to voluntarily comply with the request to refrain from using tobacco products while visiting Tumwater parks.

Section 2. Ratification. Any act consistent with the authority and prior to the effective date of this Resolution is hereby ratified and affirmed.

Section 3. Severability. The provisions of this Resolution are declared separate and severable. The invalidity of any clause, sentence, paragraph, subdivision, section, or portion of this Resolution or the invalidity of the application thereof to any person or circumstance, shall not affect the validity of the remainder of the Resolution or the validity of its application to other persons or circumstances.

Section 4. Effective Date. This Resolution shall become effective immediately upon adoption and signature provided by law.

ADOPTED this 16th day of October 2007.

Enforcing and Publicizing Your Tobacco-Free Park Policy

Post Signs

The best way to publicize your tobacco-free policy is by posting signs. This also means immediately re-posting them if you find them vandalized or torn down.

The following locations are suggested places for posting your tobacco-free signs:

- Fencing around playgrounds and fields
- Backstops
- Picnic shelters
- Restrooms
- Concession stands
- Parking lot entrances
- Beach entrances
- Lifeguard stands
- Hiking trail entrances
- Information/bulletin boards
- Near garbage cans
- Near water fountains

Inform Your Community!

There will be a local overarching media campaign educating King County residents on the importance of tobacco-free parks. You are highly encouraged to educate your internal staff, community members and the local media about your tobacco-free policies.

Here are some ways of doing so:

- Staff notification of the new policy and setting procedures for handling violations
- Bookmarks or small notification cards explaining the policy distributed by park staff or community members to park users
- Articles in a local or regional newspaper, as the result of a news release or reporters' coverage
- Park and recreation department and city newsletters
- Recreation program brochures, catalogs, and announcements
- Rulebooks or policy statements that are distributed to sports league administrators, coaches, officials, parents and participants
- Other fact sheets or educational articles about tobacco and secondhand smoke distributed at community meetings, in mailings, or through newsletters

- Postings on the recreation department's or city's website
- Public address announcements at recreation events, or public service announcements on local radio stations or public access cable channels
- Kick-off celebration or community event with tobacco-free pledges, activities, etc.

Enforcement

- Provide ongoing and clear communication about the rationale, components and enforcement of the tobacco-free environment policy.
- Discuss, plan and monitor the implementation and enforcement of this policy as you do other current policies (i.e., off-leash laws, alcohol use, etc.) especially relating to the most effective way to respond to individuals found violating the policy.
- Provide referrals for low to no-cost cessation resources to interested persons:
1-800-QUIT NOW (1-800-784-8669) or www.quitline.com

Tobacco-Free Parks Signage

FREE signs provided by Public Health-Seattle & King County and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

For signage, the tobacco-free policy must include:

- A statement that tobacco use is prohibited
- A list of all the facilities it covers
- A commitment to posting signs

Two signs will be available based on the type of policy that you intend to implement:



Please fill out the interest form if you would like to participate in this project.

Download form at: <http://www.healthykingcounty.org/forum/categories/tobaccofree-parks-1/listForCategory>

Resources

So, you know you want tobacco-free parks but you're not sure what to do next. Here are some resources and tools to help you plan, implement, and enforce your strategy.

Join Healthy King County!

Healthy King County is a social networking site for those interested and involved in Healthy Eating, Active Living and Tobacco Prevention in King County. It's like a Facebook page. The home page provides general updates and posts from members. The work groups page allows for interactions based on a common project. Our project work group is called **Healthy Parks and Recreation**.

Join this site to download information including this implementation guide. To join, go to www.healthykingcounty.org and click the **Sign Up** link on the right hand side of the page. Then go to the work groups page and click to **Add** the Healthy Parks and Recreation work group.

The following materials can be downloaded from the Healthy King County website at:

<http://www.healthykingcounty.org/forum/categories/tobaccofree-parks-1/listForCategory>

- **Policy Implementation Guide**

Download the electronic version of this toolkit

- **General Tobacco-Free Parks and Beaches Model Policy**

Download the word document version of the model policy found in this toolkit for easy editing

- **Worksheet: Develop a Policy Strategy – The “How” of Local Policy and Organizational Change**

Each community is different and it is worth taking the time to answer these important questions on how you will go about successfully creating tobacco-free parks. This is a great document to use when first convening the team of people who will be assisting in the policy initiative.

- **Handout: The Policy Adoption Model – Los Angeles County Tobacco Control and Prevention Program**

This provides you a step-by-step framework for a successful policy campaign. Take your strategy and use this framework to plan what you're going to do next. Each step is a progression from the next and provides you a strategic course of action for passing your policy.

Let's Do This – Working Together for Healthier Places to Live (Overarching Communications Campaign)

- <http://www.letsdothiskingcounty.org>
- Learn more about smoke free places: http://www.letsdothiskingcounty.org/pdf/Smoke_free_places.pdf
- Download posters: http://www.letsdothiskingcounty.org/pdf/LetsDoThis_Ads_v2.pdf

Communication Resources

- Fact Sheet: <http://www.healthykingcounty.org/forum/categories/tobaccofree-parks-1/listForCategory>
- Creating a Communications Plan Worksheet: <http://www.healthykingcounty.org/forum/topics/creating-a-communications-plan-1>
- Guide to Creating a Communications Plan: <http://www.healthykingcounty.org/forum/topics/communications-plan-overview>
- Sample Communications Plan: <http://www.healthykingcounty.org/forum/categories/tobaccofree-parks-1/listForCategory>
- Sample Press Release: <http://www.healthykingcounty.org/forum/categories/tobaccofree-parks-1/listForCategory>
- CPPW Communication Key Messages: <http://www.healthykingcounty.org/forum/topics/cppw-key-messages>
- Crafting Your Key Messages: <http://www.healthykingcounty.org/forum/topics/crafting-key-messages>
- Resources from a CPPW Media Training: <http://www.healthykingcounty.org/forum/topics/media-training-resources>

Contact Information

If you have any questions or need assistance with anything, please contact any of the Park Directors or Project Managers listed below

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