

# Tobacco-Free Parks and Playgrounds Kit

For Herkimer, Oneida, and Madison Counties in New York State



 **Caution: Lungs at Play**

This area is tobacco-free  
at all times  
indoors and outdoors  
for everyone's health.



*Thank you!*



For lists of tobacco-free parks locally and across the state, go to:

[www.PreventTobacco.org](http://www.PreventTobacco.org)  
[www.TobaccoFreeParks.com](http://www.TobaccoFreeParks.com)

## **Myths About Tobacco-Free Policies**

**Myth: Kids seeing adults using tobacco products are not influenced to use it themselves.**

Fact: Almost 25,000 New York teens start smoking every day, in part because they see their adult role models using tobacco or see it used in public places.

**Myth: Policies that prohibit tobacco use bans tobacco users from these facilities and events.**

Fact: Tobacco-free policies do not restrict any persons from using these facilities or attending the events. Rather, they only restrict behaviors. Other behaviors are already prohibited, such as alcohol and drug use.

Local studies consistently show smokers and nonsmokers alike approve of tobacco-free parks policies.

**Myth: Tobacco-free policies are needless regulations and a governmental interference; it is not even legal to ban smoking.**

Fact: It is the duty of officials to enact policies that protect the health of their citizens. It is legal to ban smoking, as smoking is not a legally protected activity.

**Myth: Tobacco-free policies will be impossible or burdensome to enforce.**

Fact: Most Central New Yorkers do not smoke. Tobacco-free regulations enacted in the past were largely self enforcing as it became the social norm not to smoke in those places.

The experience of other smoke free parks shows it is possible to enforce these policies effectively in the same manner as other codes of conduct are enforced.

**Myth: Constituents will not be in favor of this.**

Fact: Several research studies conducted locally and statewide consistently show the majority of adults, including smokers, favor tobacco-free parks and playgrounds policies.

**Myth: Cigarette butts discarded on the ground don't hurt anything. They're biodegradable.**

Fact: Cigarette butts are made of plastic and take approximately 1-2 decades to decompose. Toxins leech into ground water and soil. Children, pets, and wild animals can ingest butts, which can cause illness.

## **The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**

### **6 Major Conclusions of the Surgeon General Report**

Smoking is the single greatest avoidable cause of disease and death. In this report, *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*, the Surgeon General has concluded that:

- 1. Many millions of Americans, both children and adults, are still exposed to secondhand smoke in their homes and workplaces despite substantial progress in tobacco control.**
  - Levels of a chemical called cotinine, a biomarker of secondhand smoke exposure, fell by 70 percent from 1988-91 to 2001-02. In national surveys, however, 43 percent of U.S. nonsmokers still have detectable levels of cotinine.
  - Almost 60 percent of U.S. children aged 3-11 years—or almost 22 million children—are exposed to secondhand smoke.
  - Approximately 30 percent of indoor workers in the United States are not covered by smoke-free workplace policies.
  
- 2. Secondhand smoke exposure causes disease and premature death in children and adults who do not smoke.**
  - Secondhand smoke contains hundreds of chemicals known to be toxic or carcinogenic (cancer-causing), including formaldehyde, benzene, vinyl chloride, arsenic, ammonia, and hydrogen cyanide.
  - Secondhand smoke has been designated as a *known human carcinogen* (cancer-causing agent) by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Toxicology Program and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC). The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health has concluded that secondhand smoke is an occupational carcinogen.
  
- 3. Children exposed to secondhand smoke are at an increased risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), acute respiratory infections, ear problems, and more severe asthma. Smoking by parents causes respiratory symptoms and slows lung growth in their children.**
  - Children who are exposed to secondhand smoke are inhaling many of the same cancer-causing substances and poisons as smokers. Because their bodies are developing, infants and young children are especially vulnerable to the poisons in secondhand smoke.
  - Both babies whose mothers smoke while pregnant and babies who are exposed to secondhand smoke after birth are more likely to die from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) than babies who are not exposed to cigarette smoke.
  - Babies whose mothers smoke while pregnant or who are exposed to secondhand smoke after birth have weaker lungs than unexposed babies, which increases the risk for many health problems.
  - Among infants and children, secondhand smoke cause bronchitis and pneumonia, and increases the risk of ear infections.
  - Secondhand smoke exposure can cause children who already have asthma to experience more frequent and severe attacks.

## 6 Major Conclusions of the Surgeon General Report—continued

4. **Exposure of adults to secondhand smoke has immediate adverse effects on the cardiovascular system and causes coronary heart disease and lung cancer.**
  - Concentrations of many cancer-causing and toxic chemicals are higher in secondhand smoke than in the smoke inhaled by smokers.
  - Breathing secondhand smoke for even a short time can have immediate adverse effects on the cardiovascular system and interferes with the normal functioning of the heart, blood, and vascular systems in ways that increase the risk of a heart attack.
  - Nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke at home or at work increase their risk of developing heart disease by 25 - 30 percent.
  - Nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke at home or at work increase their risk of developing lung cancer by 20 - 30 percent.
  
5. **The scientific evidence indicates that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke.**
  - Short exposures to secondhand smoke can cause blood platelets to become stickier, damage the lining of blood vessels, decrease coronary flow velocity reserves, and reduce heart rate variability, potentially increasing the risk of a heart attack.
  - Secondhand smoke contains many chemicals that can quickly irritate and damage the lining of the airways. Even brief exposure can result in upper airway changes in healthy persons and can lead to more frequent and more asthma attacks in children who already have asthma.
  
6. **Eliminating smoking in indoor spaces fully protects nonsmokers from exposure to secondhand smoke. Separating smokers from nonsmokers, cleaning the air, and ventilating buildings cannot eliminate exposures of nonsmokers to secondhand smoke.**
  - Conventional air cleaning systems can remove large particles, but not the smaller particles or the gases found in secondhand smoke.
  - Routine operation of a heating, ventilating, and air conditioning system can distribute secondhand smoke throughout a building.
  - The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the preeminent U.S. body on ventilation issues, has concluded that ventilation technology cannot be relied on to control health risks from secondhand smoke exposure.

*The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General* was prepared by the Office on Smoking and Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Report was written by 22 national experts who were selected as primary authors. The Report chapters were reviewed by 40 peer reviewers, and the entire Report was reviewed by 30 independent scientists and by lead scientists within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Department of Health and Human Services. Throughout the review process, the Report was revised to address reviewers' comments.

### Citation

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006.  
For more information, please refer to the Resources page. Additional highlight sheets are also available at [www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco).  
Last revised: January 4, 2007

# Outdoor Secondhand Tobacco Smoke Fact Sheet

Tobacco smoke contains at least 172 toxic substances<sup>1</sup>, including:

- 3 regulated outdoor air pollutants
- 33 hazardous air pollutants
- 47 chemicals restricted as hazardous waste
- 67 chemicals known to cause cancer in humans and animals

This is true whether tobacco smoke is inhaled in the act of smoking, or inhaled by nonsmokers out of the air indoors or outdoors.

Field studies and controlled experiments were conducted at outdoor patios<sup>2</sup>, airports<sup>2,3</sup>, parks<sup>2</sup>, college campuses<sup>3</sup>, city sidewalks<sup>2</sup> and streets<sup>4</sup>, parking lots<sup>5</sup>, outdoor cafes<sup>4</sup>, amusement parks<sup>3</sup>, government and office buildings<sup>3</sup>, and the open-air area of a cruise ship traveling at 20 knots<sup>6</sup> (about 23 miles per hour).

The results show:

During smoking, tobacco smoke levels outdoors may be as high as indoor tobacco smoke levels.<sup>3</sup>

Being upwind from a smoker outdoors does not eliminate the chemicals from the air.<sup>2</sup>

People are exposed to higher levels of cancer-causing chemicals in outdoor areas when smoking is occurring than when smoking is not occurring.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Repace JL. Exposure to Secondhand Smoke. Chapter 9, In: *Exposure Analysis*, W Ott, A Steinemann, and L Wallace, Eds. CRC Press (2006).

<sup>2</sup> Klepeis, et al. (2007) Real-Time Measurement of Outdoor Tobacco Smoke Particles, *J. Air & Waste Manage. Assoc.* **57**:522–534

<sup>3</sup> CARB, 2006

<sup>4</sup> Repace JL and Rupprecht AA. Outdoor Air Pollution From Secondhand Smoke. Presented at the 13<sup>th</sup> World Conference on Tobacco Or Health, Washington, DC, July 12-15, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Denmark/Boffi

<sup>6</sup> Repace (2005) Indoor and Outdoor Carcinogen Pollution on a Cruise Ship in the Presence and Absence of Tobacco Smoking Presented at the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the International Society of Exposure Analysis, Oct. 17-21, Philadelphia, PA.

**Template: Policy**

**City-Owned Outdoor Recreational Facilities Tobacco-Free Policy**

WHEREAS, exposure to tobacco smoke causes immediate adverse effects to the cardiovascular system, causes and exacerbates serious and terminal illnesses; and

WHEREAS, the City has a unique opportunity to create and sustain an environment that supports a non-tobacco norm through a tobacco-free policy, rule enforcement, and adult-peer role modeling on City-owned outdoor recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, parents, leaders, and officials involved in recreation are role models for youth and can have a positive effect on the lifestyle choices they make; and

WHEREAS, cigarettes, once consumed in public spaces, are often discarded on the ground, causing additional maintenance expenses, diminishing the beauty of the City’s recreational facilities, and posing a risk to toddlers due to ingestion; and

WHEREAS, the prohibition of tobacco use at the City’s recreational facilities protects the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of our City;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that no person shall use any form of tobacco at or on any City-owned or operated outdoor recreational facilities, including the restrooms, spectator and concession areas. These facilities include [insert specific facilities here, e.g. playgrounds, athletic fields, beaches, aquatic areas, parks, and walking/hiking trails].

The policy will be enforced as follows.

1. Appropriate signs shall be posted in the above specified areas.
2. The community, especially facility users and staff, will be notified about this policy.
3. Staff will make periodic observations of recreational facilities to monitor for compliance, as per its existing protocols for enforcement of other rules and codes of conduct.
4. Any person found violating this policy will be politely reminded of the policy and asked to cease using tobacco products while on the grounds.
5. Persons refusing to comply with staff directives will be asked to leave.
6. Persons refusing to leave will be reported to the police and may regarded as trespassers.

This policy is effective [date].

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Signatures

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Date

## **Template: Press Release**

### [city name] Celebrates Tobacco-Free Parks

[city name], NY— [city name] announced a new policy to promote the health of residents using city parks—a tobacco-free policy.

The occasion will be marked by a tree planting at [name] park. Representatives from BRiDGES to Prevent Tobacco, a local public health policy program will be planting a tree at the park on [date] at [time].

The policy affects all indoor and outdoor areas of the park, including parking lots. Tobacco users are welcome in the parks and can opt to either abstain, leave the grounds to smoke, or use nicotine lozenges while they're at the park.

Policies like this preserve the right to clean air. While there is no legal right to smoke, the public does have a legal right to clean air.

Secondhand tobacco smoke is a serious health hazard, and research has found that it is dangerous in outdoor areas too. There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke.

About 50,000 – 60,000 nonsmokers die every year in the US because of secondhand tobacco smoke.

Tobacco users who want to quit can access the many free services available through the New York State Smokers' Quitline, 1-866-NY-QUITS.

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# Tobacco-Free Signs Order Form

## For Organizations in Herkimer, Oneida, and Madison Counties, NY

(Not for use by for organizations outside these counties, or by individuals.)

**Date of Request:** \_\_\_\_\_

Cost for signs and shipping are free. It may be necessary to limit quantities.

**Mail this form to: BRiDGES to Prevent Tobacco, 3059 Seneca Turnpike, Canastota, NY 13032, or fax to: (315) 697-2708**

Name:	City, State, Zip
Title:	Phone:
Organization:	Email Address:
Address:	Shipping Instructions:
How many of your organization's recreational facilities (parks) have enacted a tobacco-free policy?	

**Order your signs below.** *By ordering signs, I confirm that my organization has enacted a smoke-free policy as described below.*

Type of Policy	Eligible organization types	Type of Sign	Quantity Requested
Tobacco-free parks or playgrounds	ONLY parks and recreational areas	Varied, depending upon supplies available. "Caution: Lungs at play. No tobacco use indoors and outdoors, at all times, for everyone's health."	
Other items I'm interested in:			

**Check if you would like any of the following free items:**

- Listing on our website's partners page, with a link to your company's website (List your URL here: \_\_\_\_\_)
- Press conference for my staff or BRiDGES staff to announce my tobacco-free policy
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_