

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: Is it legal to create tobacco-free parks?

Answer: Yes, local governments have the legal right to adopt laws to protect residents' health and safety. This authority enables communities to adopt smoke-free laws to reduce exposure to harmful secondhand tobacco smoke.

Question: Is there really a need for tobacco-free outdoor policies?

Answer: Yes, these policies are similar to those prohibiting alcohol and litter or requiring that pets be leashed. Tobacco-free outdoor policies protect the environment and the health and safety of people using recreational areas. Additionally, with the rising use of electronic smoking devices, it is important to cover all tobacco products in outdoor spaces to protect the health of those around us.

Question: Is this something that my community wants?

Answer: More and more cities and communities are going tobacco-free. **ADD LOCAL DATA HERE SUCH AS LOCAL SURVEY DATA FROM A PUBLIC OPINION POLL OR OTHER SURVEY YOU HAVE CONDUCTED!** Here in Wisconsin, workplaces have been smoke-free since 2010 and people expect tobacco-free environments. Based on recent statewide data, 77% of Wisconsinites favor the smoke-free air laws in our state.

Question: Do tobacco-free outdoor policies keep tobacco users from using recreation areas?

Answer: People go to recreation areas to exercise or relax, not to use tobacco. Tobacco users work, shop, travel, and reside in tobacco-free places every day. Perhaps more importantly, 86% of Wisconsin adults don't smoke cigarettes, and the vast majority of nonsmokers want to enjoy recreation areas

Question: How do we enforce tobacco-free policies?

Answer: Tobacco-free parks are relatively easy to enforce because these laws are, for the most part, self-enforcing, meaning that people "police" themselves and cooperate with the law. Beyond that, it is important to provide "tobacco-free" signage and inform the media as well as reaching out to the community to inform residents of the change.

References:

"Behavioral Risk Factor Survey System", Centers for Disease Control.

["Support for Smokefree Parks."](#) ChangeLabSolutions.

["Tobacco Free Outdoors – Frequently Asked Questions,"](#) Tobacco Free New York State.