

# “HOW TO GUIDE” FOR TOBACCO-FREE PARKS AND BEACHES IN MICHIGAN

Michigan Recreation and Park Association (mParks) seeks to provide recreation and community leadership in the development, adoption, implementation, enforcement and evaluation of a tobacco free policy for Michigan parks and beaches.

## --WHY ADOPT TOBACCO-FREE POLICIES?--

Tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the U.S., killing close to half a million people each year *American Lung Association*

- Promotes individual and community health and wellness
- Protection from secondhand smoke exposure
  - Children, families, young people, pregnant women, older persons, persons with special health needs, and workers
- Protection from tobacco-related litter
  - Children
- Environment
- Lowers park maintenance costs
- Models healthy behavior
  - Demonstrating a tobacco-free community norm allows less children to adopt unhealthy behaviors
- Prevents outdoor fires
- Promotes clean water
- Concurs with Pure Michigan campaign promoting tourism

## --WHERE DO WE SEE THEM IMPLEMENTED?—

Michigan Jurisdictions with Tobacco-free Parks and/or Beach Policies

- Greenville
- City of Sault St. Marie
- Kinross Charter Twp
- City of Traverse City
- City of Escanaba
- Grand Haven Twp
- Howell
- Ottawa County
- Portage
- Holland Twp
- Ingham County Park System

## --RESOURCES--

<https://michigan.quitlogix.org/>

[www.tobaccofreemichigan.org](http://www.tobaccofreemichigan.org)

[www.no-smoke.org](http://www.no-smoke.org),

[www.tobaccofreekids.org](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org)

1-800- QUITNOW or [www.quitline.com](http://www.quitline.com)

# --HOW TO START A TOBACCO-FREE POLICY IN YOUR COMMUNITY--

## Key Strategies & Activities:

- Assemble a diverse task group with partners including government officials, local businesses, community members, and parks and recreation representatives. This will allow for a collaborative research effort to create best practices to develop a policy that best meets the needs of their public parks and beaches.
- Compile a list of public parks and beaches in the community that you will be working with
- Communicate with partners to determine the tobacco-free status of each park, if there is adequate signage, and if the policy is enforced at each specific park/beach.
- With support from the Michigan Department of Community Health (MDCH) and the Smoke-Free Environments Law Project (SFELP), and the MDHHS Tobacco-Free Toolkit, provide technical assistance to the authorities interested in passing a tobacco-free policy or ordinance. The

link to the Toolkit and a step-by-step Work Plan can be found at

[www.michigan.gov/tobaccodocuments](http://www.michigan.gov/tobaccodocuments)

Ordinances are made by a city or town government, whereas policies are governed by state laws and regulations. Inform and educate the public, get them involved in the passing of Tobacco-free policies and ordinances.

- Communicate regularly with state elected officials & provide education on the benefit of tobacco-free policies and interventions to reduce and prevent tobacco use
- Make use of local media sources to
  - A) Disperse information regarding secondhand smoke, the environmental and economic impact, and the impact of tobacco use on children and youth.
  - B) Promote informational and educational websites (see below: Enforcement and Encouragement)

## --ENFORCEMENT AND SIGNAGE--

### Posting Signs

Posting signs is the best way to publicize existing tobacco-free policies

Includes a statement that tobacco use is prohibited and specific areas and facilities it covers.

Several **suggested locations** for posting signs:

- Fencing around playgrounds and fields
- Restrooms
- Parking lot and beach entrances
- Near garbage cans
- Near water fountains
- Hiking trail entrances
- Concession stands
- Information boards

### Enforcement and Encouragement

Provide clear communication with your community about new and existing tobacco-free policies and keep them up to date on any changes made.

Inform your community by providing local media coverage including local newspapers, park newsletters, or small notification cards.

Educate all ages on the dangers of tobacco-use to human health and the environment

Recommend low cost services that provide tools to help people quit. Several resources are available for those who want to stop using tobacco products: