



Memo

To: All Park District Staff
From: Susie Kuruvilla
Date: April 18, 2012
Re: Tobacco Free Parks Policy Approved

At the April 17 meeting, the Park Board approved an ordinance prohibiting the use of all tobacco products in specific areas of our parks. **The ordinance prohibits use of any tobacco product on or within twenty-five feet of any Gurnee Park District playground, sports field, skate park, shelter or structure including the area around the Viking Park Summer Kitchen, band shell, and at any Gurnee Park District outdoor special event.** The ordinance is effective April 27, 2012. There are monetary penalties imposed for violations and the Gurnee Police Department has the power to enforce the ordinance. The full ordinance will be available to read at www.gurneeparkdistrict.com/park-rules.

The ordinance defines "tobacco products" as *any lighted or unlighted cigarette (clove, bidis, kreteks), e-cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, pipes, hookah products; and any other smoking product; and any smokeless, spit or spit less, dissolvable, or inhaled tobacco products, including but not limited to dip, chew, snuff or snus, in any form (orbs, sticks, strips, pellet, etc.); and all nicotine delivery devices that are not FDA-approved as cessation products.*

The new ordinance supplements current Illinois law that prohibits smoking within buildings, facilities and vehicles owned, leased or otherwise in possession or under the control of the Park District, or within 15 feet of facility entrances/exits, windows that open and ventilation intakes.

While the Park Board is sensitive to the personal freedoms and choices of employees and our patrons, the ordinance addresses the equal need for all to have a healthy environment in which to enjoy recreational opportunities. Attached to this memo is a Lake County Health Dept. flyer entitled "*Tobacco-Free Parks Make Sense*". This is for your information.

If you are an employee who chooses to use tobacco, please adhere to the new regulations. Personnel policy is being revised to include this as a cause for disciplinary action. Marketing materials are being prepared to communicate this change to our participants, volunteer coaches, etc. Please call me if you have any questions.

Tobacco-Free Parks Make Sense



Lake County residents use parks as a means to improve their physical fitness, enjoy time with their family, or get in touch with nature. Unfortunately, many encounter littered tobacco products and secondhand smoke while they are there. Inside or out, tobacco is harmful to your health, and the litter is harmful to the Earth. Below are some reasons why tobacco-free parks make sense.

It's Healthier.

- Secondhand smoke in outdoor public places can reach levels as high as in indoor facilities where smoking is permitted. (*Repace Associates*)
- Many nonsmokers exposed to outdoor tobacco smoke suffer immediate symptoms including breathing difficulties, eye irritation, headache, nausea, and asthma attacks.
- The Environmental Protection Agency categorizes secondhand smoke as a known human carcinogen, a cancer-causing chemical in the same category as radon, benzene, and asbestos.

It's Green.

- Cigarette butts are the most littered item in the world. They are a fire hazard, increase park maintenance expenses, and can be eaten by toddlers, birds, and other animals.
- Filters are not biodegradable and can take 5-10 years to decompose.
- Chemicals in cigarette butts, like hydrogen, cyanide, and arsenic, leak into the soil and water.

It Promotes Healthy Communities.



- **Coaches and recreational leaders become tobacco-free role models**, sending a message to youth that tobacco is not part of a healthy lifestyle.
- Tobacco-free policies establish the community norm that tobacco use is not an acceptable behavior for young people or adults.
- **Tobacco-free parks break the connection between tobacco and sports.** Sports and other physical activity improve health and reduce *preventable* disease, such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension and cancer. Secondhand smoke and tobacco use, on the other hand, increase the risk of those same diseases.
- **Park policies create consistency for all youth recreational facilities in the community.** Tobacco use is already prohibited on public school grounds, and many Lake County communities have smoke-free ordinances covering outdoor areas. Therefore, tobacco-free park policies would help reduce confusion about which facilities are tobacco-free.
- **All tobacco-free policies encourage smokers to quit**, reduce the number of cigarettes smoked, and help former smokers remain smoke-free.

Sources:

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation, "Playing Tobacco-free: Tobacco-Free policies For Outdoor Recreation Facilities", www.ansrmn.org, July 2004
Repace, James, "Banning Outdoor Smoking is Scientifically Justifiable." *Tobacco Control*, March 2000.
California Environmental Protection Agency, Toxic Volatile Organic Compounds in Environmental Tobacco Smoke: Emission Factors for Modeling Exposures of California Populations, October 1994.
Forster, J., "Policy Approaches to Reducing Adolescent Tobacco Use." *Healthy Generations* 1 (1). University of Minnesota, School of Public Health, Division of Epidemiology, Maternal & Child Health, 2000, pg 10
Moskowitz, Joel M.; Zihua, Lin and Hudes, Ester S., "The Impact of Workplace Smoking Ordinances in California on Smoking Cessation." *American Journal of Public Health*, 2000, 90(5) pp.757-761

For more information, contact Tobacco Free Lake County at 847-377-8090 or TFLC@lakecountyil.gov



This project was made possible by funds received from the Illinois Department of Public Health.

The Truth about Tobacco Litter



The biggest litter problem. Cigarettes are the most littered item in the United States and the world.¹

Several trillion cigarette butts/filters are littered worldwide every year. That's billions of cigarettes flicked, one at a time, on sidewalks, beaches, nature trails, gardens, and other public places every single day adding up to 1.7 billion pounds of litter.²

Cigarette filters are made of PLASTIC. About 96% of cigarette filters are composed of cellulose acetate, a form of plastic that can persist in the environment as long as other forms of plastic.²

Slow decomposition. A single cigarette filter can take 5-10 years to decompose.³ After a cigarette finally decomposes, it remains chemically present in the environment. Chemicals such as hydrogen, cyanide, and arsenic leak into nearby waterways and environments.⁴

Cleaning up the shorelines. The International Coastal Cleanup (ICC) is an annual worldwide effort to clean up litter on beaches, lakes, and streams. Here is what they have found:

- In the 2005 ICC cleanup, enough cigarette filters were picked up that, if stacked end-to-end, they would go to the moon and back...twice!³
- Right here in Illinois for the ICC's 2005 cleanup, 44.3% of collected debris consisted of smoking related products in the form of cigarette and cigar butts, filters, and tobacco packaging.³
- In September of 2006, volunteers collected 5,654 butts from Chicago's North Avenue Beach in three hours.⁵



Children and wildlife can mistake cigarette filters for food. When ingested, the toxins in the cigarettes can cause nausea, vomiting, and other symptoms in children. Filter ingestion has also been known to cause death in many animals.³ In 2003, the United Nations International Maritime Organization reported that cigarette litter adversely affected 177 species of marine animals and 111 species of seabirds through ingestion.⁶

Littered cigarettes can start fires. These fires can cause massive amounts of damage and cost billions of dollars to the public. Nationally, annual human and property costs of fires caused by careless smoking total about \$6 billion.³

¹ CigaretteLitter.org

² American Littoral Society

³ Clean Virginia Waterways Project

⁴ Ocean Conservancy – International Coastal Cleanup

⁵ "How the butts stack up" Chicago Tribune, 6/18/2008

⁶ "Protecting Nonsmokers but Taking a Toll on the Environment?" The Environmental Magazine

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