



TOBACCO-FREE PARKS: FOR A HEALTHY COMMUNITY

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University of Minnesota Tobacco-Free Parks and Recreation Research Study

[Summary Fact Sheet](#)

Key Findings:

The majority of Minnesotans support tobacco-free park and recreation

policies. A summer 2004 survey of Minnesota residents – from both the metro area and greater Minnesota – revealed that 70% of Minnesota adults support tobacco-free park and recreation areas. In addition, two-thirds of golfers and nearly three-quarters (73%) of families with children support these policies. The study even revealed that 28% of smokers support these policies.

Park staff have experienced few problems any many benefits with the policies and overwhelmingly recommend tobacco-free policies to other communities. Interviews were conducted with 452 of these individuals, representing the 200 largest Minnesota cities, all Minnesota counties with county parks, and all Minnesota cities with existing tobacco-free park policies. In communities where tobacco-free park and recreation policies have already been adopted, an overwhelming majority (88%) of park directors and board members reported the policies were not very difficult to pass. Study findings also revealed several positive observations after the policies were implemented: 88% reported no change in park usage, 71% reported less smoking in parks, and 58% reported cleaner park areas.

Park directors and park board members also offered insight on enforcement and compliance of tobacco-free park policies. While most directors in communities with no tobacco-free policy had concerns about enforcing policies, only one-quarter of directors in communities with policies actually reported having compliance issues.

The Tobacco-Free Park and Recreation Study was carried out as a partnership among the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota Recreation and Park Association, and the Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation program, with funding provided by the Minnesota Partnership for Action Against Tobacco. Surveys were mailed to randomly selected Minnesota residents age 22 and older in July 2004; phone interviews with park directors and park board members were conducted from May to October 2004.

For more detailed information on the study, or for assistance in adopting a tobacco-free park policy, contact Derek Larsen, Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation Program Director, at (651) 646-3005 or derek@ansrnmn.org.

Repape, James. "Measurements of Outdoor Air Pollution from Secondhand Smoke on the UMBC Campus."

These experiments dispel the common misconception that smoking outdoors can be ignored because smoke plumes immediately dissipate into the environment.

See the [full report](#)

California Air Resources Board

Secondhand smoke exposure in the outdoors is often mistaken to be safe due to the mixing of the smoke with fresh air. The ARB conducted an outdoor monitoring study as part of its investigation into Secondhand smoke as a Toxic Air Contaminant. This study had some surprising results: some of the concentrations of nicotine measured were found to be just as high as some documented indoor exposures.

See the [full report](#)

Klepeis, Neil. "Real-Time Measurement of Outdoor Tobacco Smoke Particles."

In this first published study of exposure to outdoor tobacco smoke, investigators measured air pollution levels during visits to outdoor pubs, cafes, and sidewalks where smokers were present.

See the [full report](#)

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