

A Policy Maker's Guide to Tobacco-Free Policies for Parks, Playgrounds and Athletic Facilities



***PROVIDING TOBACCO-FREE RECREATION
FOR YOUR COMMUNITY***

Playing Tobacco Free: Tobacco-Free Policies For Park & Recreation Facilities

Tobacco-free park and recreation areas promote health

- *Parks are established to promote healthy activities.* The purpose of park areas is to promote community wellness, and tobacco-free policies fit with this idea.
- *Secondhand smoke harms everyone.* Secondhand smoke is a human carcinogen for which there is no safe level of exposure. Exposure to secondhand smoke has immediate health consequences such as asthma attacks and other respiratory diseases.
- *Secondhand smoke is harmful in outdoor settings.* According to Repace Associates, secondhand smoke levels in outdoor public places can reach levels as high as those found in indoor facilities where smoking is permitted.
- *Cigarette litter is dangerous.* Discarded cigarettes pollute the land and water and may be ingested by toddlers, pets, birds or fish.
- *Tobacco-free policies help change community norms.* Tobacco-free policies establish the community norm that tobacco use is not an acceptable behavior for young people or adults within the entire community.

Why are Minnesota cities adopting tobacco-free park policies?

- *Most Minnesotans support tobacco-free park and recreation policies.* A 2004 University of Minnesota survey found that 70% of Minnesota residents support tobacco-free park and recreation areas. In addition, 66% of golfers and 73% of families with children support these policies.
- *Policies provide consistency among community athletic facilities and groups.* The majority of community sporting events are held at either city or school district athletic facilities, and nearly all school districts prohibit tobacco use on their entire grounds. Also, many community athletic associations have policies but use city recreation facilities and would benefit from a city-wide policy.
- *Policies reduce litter and maintenance costs.* In a 2004 survey, 58% of Minnesota park directors in cities with policies reported cleaner park areas.
- *Tobacco-free environments promote positive community role modeling and protect the health, safety, and welfare of community members.*



Association for Nonsmokers--Minnesota
2395 University Ave. West, # 310
St. Paul, MN 55114-1512
(651) 646-3005; tfyr@ansrmn.org

The Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation Initiative

Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation (TFYR) is Minnesota's statewide recreation-based tobacco prevention program that assists recreational groups in promoting healthy tobacco-free lifestyles. TFYR offers assistance in tobacco-free policy development and implementation and also distributes materials that promote the tobacco-free sports message throughout Minnesota.

Policy adoption assistance & FREE signs available through TFYR

TFYR offers municipal park & recreation departments technical assistance in tobacco-free policy development. To help with policy implementation, TFYR provides 12" x 18" metal blue & white tobacco-free signs for FREE to Minnesota cities that adopt comprehensive tobacco-free policies for their outdoor recreational facilities (**limit 100 per community**).

To qualify for the signs, the tobacco-free policy must include:

- A list of all the facilities it covers.
- A statement that all forms of tobacco use are prohibited.
- An enforcement plan that includes
 - a) community and staff notification; and
 - b) signage.



Tobacco-Free Signs

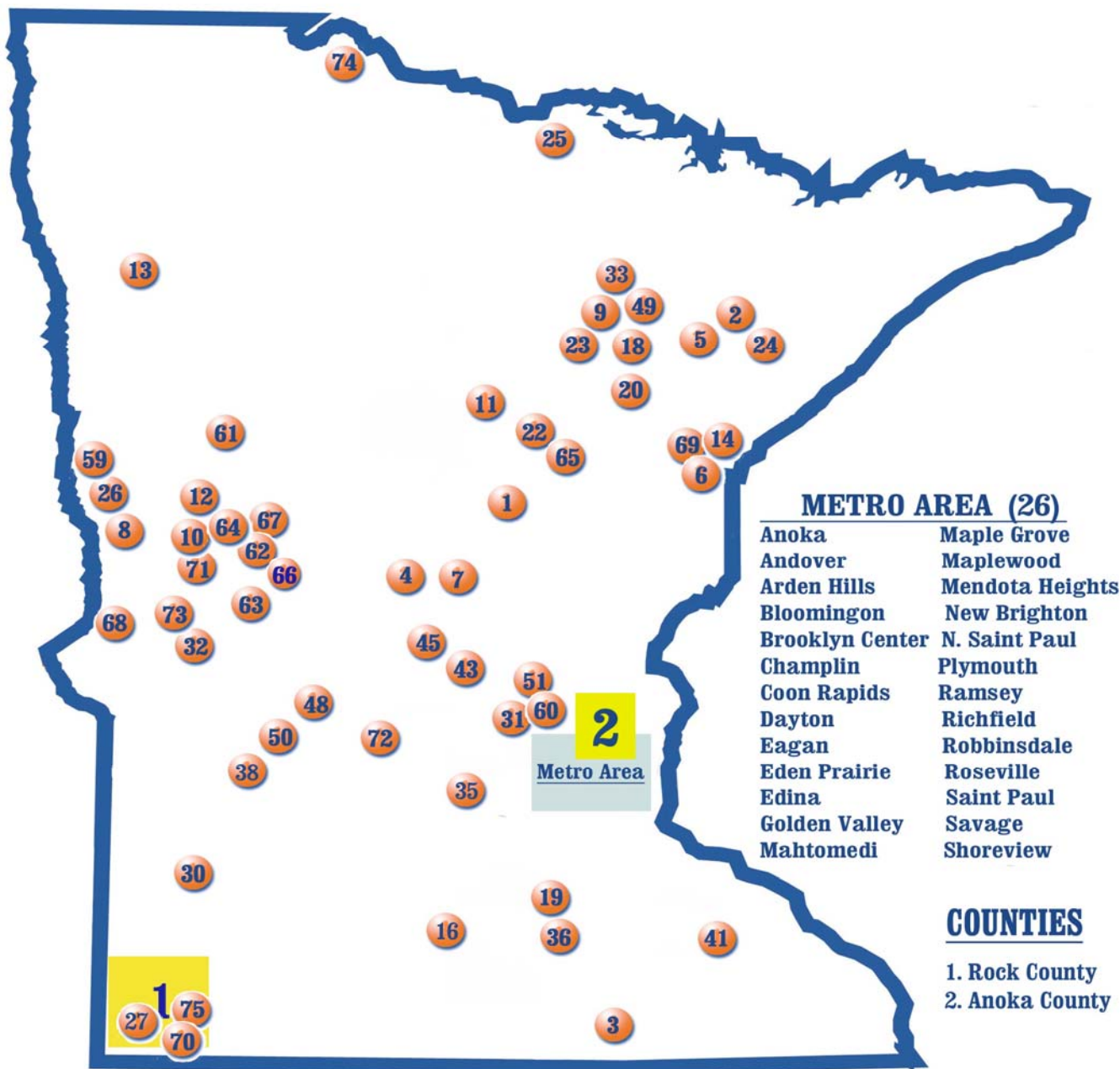
Contact TFYR staff (see below left) for policy adoption assistance. Once a policy has been adopted in your community, send a copy of the policy and a completed sign order form to TFYR. Download an order form from our web site at <www.ansrmn.org>.

Minnesota Cities with Tobacco-Free Outdoor Recreational Facilities

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| • Adrian | • Eagle Lake | • New Brighton |
| • Aitkin | • Eden Prairie | • New York Mills |
| • Alexandria | • Edina | • Nwd Yng America |
| • Andover | • Elbow Lake | • North St. Paul |
| • Anoka | • Elk River | • Owatonna |
| • Anoka County | • Ellsworth | • Parkers Prairie |
| • Arden Hills | • Eveleth | • Pelican Rapids |
| • Aurora | • Faribault | • Plymouth |
| • Austin | • Fayal Township | • Prinsburg |
| • Battle Lake | • Fergus Falls | • Ramsey |
| • Baxter | • Golden Valley | • Richfield |
| • Biwabik | • Grand Rapids | • Robbinsdale |
| • Bloomington | • Henning | • Rochester |
| • Brainerd | • Hermantown | • Rock County |
| • Breckenridge | • Hibbing | • Roseville |
| • Brooklyn Center | • Hoyt Lakes | • Sartell |
| • Buhl | • Int'l Falls | • Savage |
| • Callaway | • Kent | • Shoreview |
| • Champlin | • La Prairie | • Spicer |
| • Cloquet | • Luverne | • St. Cloud |
| • Cohasset | • Mahtomedi | • St. Paul |
| • Coon Rapids | • Maple Grove | • Virginia |
| • Crookston | • Maplewood | • Wheaton |
| • Dassel | • Marshall | • Williams |
| • Dayton | • Mendota Heights | • Willmar |
| • Donnelly | • Monticello | • Wolverton |
| • Duluth | • Morris | • Zimmerman |
| • Eagan | • Mountain Iron | |

Tobacco-Free Park & Recreational Facilities in Minnesota

(Park Policies & City Ordinances)



GREATER MINNESOTA (55)

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| Adrian 75 | Cloquet 6 |
| Aitkin 1 | Cohasset 11 |
| Alexandria 63 | Crookston 13 |
| Aurora 2 | Dassel 72 |
| Austin 3 | Donnelly 73 |
| Battle Lake 64 | Duluth 14 |
| Baxter 4 | Eagle Lake 16 |
| Biwabik 5 | Elbow Lake 71 |
| Brainerd 7 | Elk River 60 |
| Breckenridge 8 | Ellsworth 70 |
| Buhl 9 | Eveleth 18 |
| Callaway 61 | |

- | |
|------------------------|
| Faribault 19 |
| Fayal Township 20 |
| Fergus Falls 10 |
| Grand Rapids 22 |
| Henning 62 |
| Hermantown 69 |
| Hibbing 23 |
| Hoyt Lakes 24 |
| International Falls 25 |
| Kent 26 |
| La Prairie 65 |
| Luverne 27 |

- | |
|--------------------------|
| Marshall 30 |
| Monticello 31 |
| Morris 32 |
| Mountain Iron 33 |
| New York Mills 67 |
| Norwood Young America 35 |
| Owatonna 36 |
| Parkers Prairie 66 |
| Pelican Rapids 12 |
| Prinsburg 38 |
| Rochester 41 |

- | |
|--------------|
| St. Cloud 43 |
| Sartell 45 |
| Spicer 48 |
| Virginia 49 |
| Wheaton 68 |
| Williams 74 |
| Willmar 50 |
| Wolverton 59 |
| Zimmerman 51 |



Frequently Asked Questions

about Tobacco-Free Policies for Park Areas in Minnesota

What is current Minnesota state law on smoking outdoors?

There is currently no state law that regulates tobacco use in outdoor areas.

Are local governments able to enact policies restricting tobacco use?

Neither federal nor state law prohibits local governments from regulating tobacco use outdoors.¹

What is the difference between a park policy and an ordinance?

In general, *park policies* are rules regarding city-owned park property that are established by the city park board and are often approved by the city council. Generally, those who ignore park policies do not receive a fine, but are asked to refrain from using tobacco or leave the premises.

City ordinances are city council enactments that regulate people or property and carry a penalty such as a fine for violations. Ordinances often originate from a recommendation passed by the city park board.²

For both park policies and city ordinances, tobacco use is prohibited on city park property.

Should a policy cover all property and activities or just youth events?

In Minnesota, both types of policies exist, but the recent trend is toward "all property" policies because they may be simpler for citizens to understand, rather than to determine which activities qualify as "youth events."

How do other Minnesota cities and townships enforce their policies?

Minnesota cities and townships with tobacco-free park policies post signs in their park areas that announce the policy. These signs provide cities with the ability to rely on community and self-enforcement. Many tobacco users look for "no tobacco" signs. These signs empower everyone using the parks to provide friendly reminders about the policy to violators. Signs also help to eliminate the need for any law enforcement presence. The majority of Minnesota cities with policies have received their signs free of charge from Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation.

In addition to signs, cities notify their community members in a variety of ways: local media, city newsletters, policy reminder cards, recreation program brochures, policy statements sent to sports associations, and coaches' trainings.

Are existing policies working?

Yes! According to a 2004 University of Minnesota survey of Minnesota park directors in cities with such policies, 88% of park directors reported no change in park usage (no loss of park users), 71% reported less smoking in parks, and 58% reported cleaner park areas.

What effect do tobacco-free park policies have on youth?

Research has not been completed on this particular topic, but in general, tobacco-free policies help prevent youth tobacco use, particularly by providing adults the opportunity to be tobacco-free role models throughout the community.³

What other benefits result from tobacco-free policies?

Cigarette filters are not biodegradable, so they do not decay and cannot be absorbed by the environment. A policy reduces park and beach litter and protects toddlers from ingesting filters that are discarded. In Minnesota, smoking-related debris accounted for 52% of total debris during a 2003 coastal cleanup.⁴

Will policies keep some people from using city parks?

Tobacco-free policies for public park areas ensure that all citizens have a healthy recreational environment. People go to parks to exercise or relax, not to use tobacco. Smokers work, shop, travel, and reside in smoke-free environments every day. No court has determined that smoking is a constitutionally protected right.⁵

Aren't tobacco-free policies for parks a needless regulation?

These policies are similar to those prohibiting alcohol and litter or requiring that pets be leashed. It is the duty of policy makers to enact policies that protect the health of their citizens.

¹ Minnesota Attorney General Mike Hatch. (5/4/00). Legal opinion letter to Peter Vogel.

² League of Minnesota Cities. (2003). *Handbook for Minnesota Cities*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.lmnc.org/handbook/chapter07.pdf>.

³ Perry, C. (1999). *Creating Health Behavior Change: How to Develop Community-Wide Programs for Youth*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

⁴ The Ocean Conservancy. (2004). *International Coastal Cleanup 2003 Minnesota Summary Report*. [Online]. Available: <http://www.coastalcleanup.org>.

⁵ Tobacco Control Legal Consortium. (2004). "Legal Authority to Regulate Smoking and Common Legal Threats and Challenges."



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

WHEREAS, the City believes that tobacco use in the proximity of children and adults engaging in or watching outdoor recreational activities at City-owned or operated facilities is detrimental to their health and can be offensive to those using such facilities; 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, the City believes 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, the tobacco industry advertises at and sponsors recreational events to foster a connection between tobacco use and recreation; and

WHEREAS, cigarettes, once consumed in public spaces, are often discarded on the ground requiring additional maintenance expenses, diminish the beauty of the City's recreational facilities, and pose a risk to toddlers due to ingestion; and

WHEREAS, the City Park & Recreation Board determines that the prohibition of tobacco use at the City's recreational facilities serves to protect the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of our City.

Section 1: Tobacco use prohibited in outdoor recreational facilities

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].

Section 2: Enforcement

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.
4. Any person found violating this policy may be subject to immediate ejection from the recreation facility for the remainder of the event.

Section 3: Effective Date

This policy statement is effective immediately upon the date of adoption.

Appropriate City Official

Date



ANDOVER PARKS AND RECREATION

SUBJECT

Andover Parks and Recreation Tobacco-Free Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The city of Andover is committed to the quality of life for all residents, therefore, we believe that:

1. Tobacco product use in proximity of children, youth and adults engaging in or watching recreational activities is unhealthy and detrimental to the health of others.
2. Tobacco products once consumed in public spaces are often discarded on the ground, thus posing a risk of ingestion to toddlers and causing a litter problem.
3. As parents, leaders and coaches, and officials we are thought of as role models, and the use of tobacco products around youth has a negative effect on their lifestyle choices.

TOBACCO-FREE FACILITIES

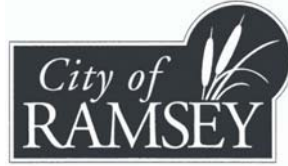
The City of Andover does not allow the use of tobacco products on City-owned parkland, park facilities, open space or joint city/school district properties except within the confines of a vehicle in a designated parking area.

COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES

The emphasis on enforcing the Tobacco-free park policy is through voluntary compliance:

1. Appropriate City-owned parkland, park facilities, open space or joint City/school district properties will be signed.
2. City of Andover staff will meet with activity organizations and/or leaders or coaches to discuss the policy and to distribute flyers with the "Tobacco-free" regulations.
3. City of Andover staff will make periodic observations of activity sites to monitor compliance and help to promote awareness of the tobacco-free policy.

Policy Adoption Date: 9/21/04



Ramsey Park and Recreation

SUBJECT

City of Ramsey Parks and Recreation Tobacco-Free Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Ramsey is committed to the quality of life for all residents, therefore, we believe that:

1. Tobacco product use in the proximity of children, youth and adults engaging in or watching recreational activities is unhealthy and detrimental to the health of others.
2. Tobacco products once consumed in public spaces are often discarded on the ground, thus posing a risk of ingestion to toddlers and causing a litter problem.
3. As parents, leaders, coaches and officials we are thought of as role models, and the use of tobacco products around youth has a negative effect on their lifestyle choices.

TOBACCO FREE FACILITIES

The City of Ramsey does not allow the use of tobacco products on city-owned parkland, park facilities, open space or joint city/ school district properties except within the confines of a vehicle in a designated parking area.

COMPLIANCE PROCEDURES

The emphasis on enforcing the Tobacco-Free park policy is through voluntary compliance:

1. Appropriate city-owned parkland and park facilities will be signed.
2. City of Ramsey staff will meet with activity organizations and / or leaders or coaches to discuss the policy and to distribute flyers with the "Tobacco-Free" regulations.
3. City of Ramsey staff will make periodic observations of activity sites to monitor compliance.
4. Any person found violating this policy will be asked to leave the facility for the remainder of the event.

Policy Adoption Date: May 25, 2004



CITY OF ANOKA

TOBACCO-FREE PARKS POLICY

Policy Number 2004-03

Adopted July 6, 2004

I. Introduction.

The City of Anoka is committed to the quality of life for all residents; therefore, we believe that:

1. Tobacco product use in the proximity of children, youth, and adults engaging in or watching recreational activities is unhealthy and detrimental to the health of others.
2. Tobacco products, once consumed in public spaces, are often discarded on the ground; thus, posing a risk of ingestion by toddlers and causing a litter problem.
3. As parents, leaders, and officials, we are thought of as role models; and the use of tobacco products around youth has a negative effect on their lifestyle choices.

II. Tobacco Free Facilities.

The City of Anoka does not allow the use of tobacco products on City-owned parkland, park facilities, playgrounds, athletic fields, or City/School District property where signs are posted.

III. Compliance Procedures.

1. The emphasis on enforcing the Tobacco-Free Park Policy is through voluntary compliance.
2. Appropriate City-owned parkland, park facilities, or joint City/School District properties will be signed.
3. Athletic associations that utilize City-owned facilities will be asked to comply.
4. Staff will make periodic observations of recreational facilities to monitor for compliance.



Park & Recreation Tobacco-Free Park System Policy

1. Guideline Statement

City of Champlin Parks and Recreation Tobacco-Free Policy is designed to protect the health, welfare, and safety of our park patrons.

2. Policy Statement

The City of Champlin is committed to the quality of life for all residents, therefore, we believe that:

- Tobacco product use in the proximity of children, youth and adults engaging in or watching recreational activities is unhealthy and detrimental to the health of others.
- Tobacco products consumed in public spaces are often discarded on the ground, thus posing a risk of ingestion to toddlers and causing a litter problem.
- As parents, leaders, coaches, and officials, we are thought of as role models and the use of tobacco products around youth has a negative effect on their lifestyle choices.

3. Tobacco-Free Facilities

The City of Champlin does not allow the use of tobacco products on City-owned park land, recreational facilities, City facilities, and open space.

4. Compliance Procedures

The emphasis on enforcing the Tobacco-Free parks and recreation policy is through voluntary compliance:

- Appropriate City-owned park land, recreational facilities, open space will be signed.
- City of Champlin staff will meet with activity organizations and \ or leaders or coaches to discuss the policy and to distribute flyers with the "Tobacco Free" regulations.
- City staff will make periodic observations of activity sites to monitor compliance.

5. Adoption date: May 10, 2004

City of Shoreview, Minnesota Parks and Recreation Department

Tobacco-Free Park Policy

Subject: Prohibition of tobacco product use in the City of Shoreview's park system.

Purpose: In order to protect the health and welfare of our citizens and park visitors, the Shoreview Parks and Recreation Department prohibits the use of tobacco products on City-owned parkland, park facilities, and open space.

Policy: No person shall use tobacco products on City-owned parkland, park facilities, and open space except according to the following exemptions.

1. At the Community Center's designated smoking areas.
2. At the outdoor areas of the Commons Park pavilion during private events.

Implementation: The emphasis on enforcing the Tobacco-Free park policy is through voluntary compliance.

1. Signs shall be posted at all City-owned parks, recreation facilities, and open space.
2. City staff will make periodic observations of recreation facilities and parkland to monitor for compliance.
3. A community education program will be implemented to assist in enforcing this policy.
4. Athletic associations that utilize City-owned facilities must commit to enforcing this policy.

Adoption date: May 3, 2004

Enforcing and Publicizing Your Tobacco-Free Park Policy

A well-publicized policy informs park users about the reasons why the policy has been adopted and helps enforce the policy by reducing violations.

1. Post Signs

The most important way to publicize your tobacco-free policy is by posting signs.

If you have not done so already, contact Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation to order metal tobacco-free signs.



The following locations are suggested places for posting your tobacco-free signs:

- Fencing around playgrounds and fields
- Backstops
- Picnic shelters
- Restrooms
- Concession stands
- Parking lot entrances
- Beach entrances
- Lifeguard stands
- Hiking trail entrances
- Skating rink warming houses

3. Ask for Assistance!

These groups will assist you in publicizing your tobacco-free policy:

- Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation, (651) 646-3005, tfyr@ansrmn.org
- Your local tobacco-free coalition
- Your local public health agency

2. Let Community Members Know About the Policy

In addition to posting signs, park and recreation staff has used a variety of means to educate citizens about their tobacco-free policies:

- Staff notification of the new policy and setting procedures for handling violations. *“Help Enforce Our Policy” handouts, p. 2.*
- Bookmarks or small notification cards explaining the policy distributed by park staff or community members to park users. *Sample cards from Luverne, MN and bookmarks from Anoka County, MN, pp. 3-5.*
- Articles in a local or regional newspaper, as the result of a news release or reporters’ coverage of city council meetings. *Draft news release, p. 6.*
- Park and recreation department and city newsletters. *Sample city newsletters from Shoreview, MN, and Ramsey, MN, p. 7.*
- Recreation program brochures, catalogs, and announcements. *Sample recreation program brochure from Richfield, MN, pp. 8-9.*
- Rulebooks or policy statements that are distributed to sports league administrators, coaches, officials, parents, and participants. *Sample notification letter, p. 10; Sample team schedule, p. 11.*
- Other fact sheets or educational articles about tobacco and secondhand smoke distributed at coaches’ meetings, in mailings, or through newsletters. *Sample articles, pp. 12-14.*
- Postings on the recreation department’s or city’s website.
- Public address announcements at recreation events, or public service announcements on local radio stations or public access cable channels. *Sample announcement, p. 15.*
- Kick-off celebration or community event with tobacco-free pledges, activities, etc. Potential dates for this event: April 3—Kick Butts Day; May 31—World No Tobacco Day; Thursday prior to Thanksgiving—Great American Smoke Out. *Sample pledges, p. 16; Sample community events, p. 17.*

Please note: computer artwork files are available from TFYR for the tobacco-free sign image.



Free Signs!

Minnesota cities that adopt comprehensive tobacco-free policies for their recreational facilities and park property can order FREE metal 12" x 18" tobacco-free signs from TFYR to help with policy implementation.

To qualify for the signs, the tobacco-free policy must include:

- A list of all the facilities it covers
- A statement that all forms of tobacco use are prohibited
- An enforcement plan that includes a) user and staff notification; and b) signage.



Tobacco-Free Signs

*A maximum of 100 signs is allowed per community. Additional signs are available at cost. **Contact TFYR for details.***

Please contact Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation to find out how a tobacco-free policy for outdoor recreational facilities can benefit your community.

For technical assistance in policy development and suggestions for tobacco prevention strategy implementation, contact:

Brittany McFadden, Program Director
Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation
2395 University Ave. West, Suite 310
St. Paul, MN 55114-1512
(651) 646-3005; bhm@ansrmn.org



Please contact the people listed below to find out how a tobacco-free policy for outdoor recreational facilities can benefit your community.

For suggestions or feedback from communities who have implemented tobacco-free policies, contact:

New Brighton Parks & Recreation Department
Steve Rymer, Director of Parks & Recreation
400 10th St NW
New Brighton, MN 55112
(651) 638-2126; steve.rymer@newbrightonmn.gov

Plymouth Parks & Recreation Department
Diane Evans, Supt. of Recreation
3400 Plymouth Blvd.
Plymouth, MN 55447
(763) 509-5220; devans@ci.plymouth.mn.us

Coon Rapids Parks & Recreation Department
Bruce Thielen, Public Works Director
1831 – 111th Ave. NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55433
(763) 767-6578; thielen@ci.coon-rapids.mn.us

Morris Community Education
Cindy Perkins, Director
600 Columbia Ave.
Morris, MN 56267
(320) 589-4394; cperkins@maes.morris.k12.mn.us

Grand Rapids Parks & Recreation Department
Dale Anderson, Director
420 N. Pokegama Ave.
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
(218) 326-2500; danderson@ci.grand-rapids.mn.us