

DHD#10 SUPPORTS TOBACCO FREE PARKS AND BEACHES

March 18, 2022 – District Health Department #10 (DHD#10) and Michigan Recreation and Park Association (mParks) seek 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). Adopting tobacco-free policies at the local level helps to:

- Promote individual and community health and wellness
- Provide protection from secondhand smoke exposure, especially among children, families, young people, pregnant women, older persons, persons with special health needs, and workers.
- Protect the environment from tobacco-related litter. Tobacco/nicotine litter is toxic to wildlife, including aquatic life, and pollutes our waterways. A single cigarette butt can take 5-10 years to decompose. A tobacco-free policy would help to protect the environment and keep it beautiful for generations to come.
- Lower park maintenance costs
- Model healthy behavior in the local community. Demonstrating a tobacco-free community norm allows less children to adopt unhealthy behaviors.
- Prevent outdoor fires
- Promote clean water
- Concurs with Pure Michigan campaign to promote tourism
- Electronic nicotine delivery systems (ENDS), also called electronic cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vaping devices, or vape pens, are battery-powered devices used to smoke or “vape” a flavored solution are not harmless water vapor. Both the user and those around them are exposed to chemicals, some of which cause cancer.
 - There are currently no clean, environmentally conscious methods for disposing of vape device, including disposable “single use” products. This creates additional litter and waste that can contaminate recreational areas and worsen environmental pollution.

Supplementing tobacco-free policies in community spaces (parks and playgrounds) with information pertaining to tobacco cessation resources can help encourage current tobacco users to quit.

Check out the Michigan Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW or <https://michigan.quitlogix.org/en-US/>) or find local resources in your area by visiting <https://www.livewell4health.org/tobacco-cessation>.



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