

Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story

Fire Chief and Prevention Partners Handle the Smoke

Summary

Key people were prepared and ready to take action writing and implementing a workplace no-smoking policy, including the Monroe Fire Chief and their town office, Maine DHHS, Tobacco Prevention Services and the local District Tobacco Prevention Partner.

Challenge

By law, every employer needs to establish a written policy that prohibits smoking throughout enclosed areas of business facilities. The Workplace Smoking Act of 1985 (22 M.R.S. §150-A), was enacted to protect the employer and employees from the detrimental effects of smoking by others. According to Maine Public Health Association more than 20 in 100 adults in Waldo County are cigarette smokers, 20.3% the 8th highest rate in Maine. There is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke exposure, even brief exposure can be harmful and can lead to cancer and other diseases.



Intervention



Tobacco and no-smoking policies are vital in reducing harm. When the Department of Health and Human Services sent the Town of Monroe their permit for the Fire Department's SCBA bottle refill station, it came with an attached notice that employers must establish a written smoking policy. Lacking the needed policy, the Fire Chief took charge reaching out for help from DHHS setting in motion connection with Tobacco Prevention Services and the Waldo County District Tobacco Prevention Partner. With help from these key people, the Town of Monroe enacted a workplace no-smoking policy and posted signs in less than 2 weeks.

"Thanks! Working with you (local District Tobacco Prevention Partner) made writing this policy easy. I will share your contact information with the other Waldo County Fire Chiefs."
- Ken Clements, Monroe Fire Chief



Results/ Success

Key people were well prepared to take action. Running businesses in Maine people have to perform multiple duties; writing health promoting policy is not a skill that most are prepared for. Having easy access to help with writing policy, the very busy Fire Chief was able to take care of the requirement and get back to the vital business of being prepared to help his community in their time of need.



Sustainability

As stated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, tobacco and no-smoking policies are a key strategy for eliminating harmful exposure to secondhand smoke. Policies including support for tobacco cessation create change for healthier and restorative social norms.

For More Information Contact us:

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Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services