

Updating Tobacco Policies to Address Emerging Trends

Highlighting Healthy Androscoggin's Partnership with the Androscoggin Land Trust

New Challenges

Young people today are facing new challenges as they navigate the mixed messages surrounding the flavored e-cigarette products designed by tobacco companies to attract new users. According to the 2019 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey, in Androscoggin County **28.3% of high school students said they used an electronic vapor product at least once in the past 30 days** and there has been a significant increase in overall tobacco product use among youth in the past 5 years. This highlights the **need for tobacco policies to adapt and address these new products** to ensure that young people are protected from the predatory marketing tactics of the tobacco industry.

Making Changes

With support from Healthy Androscoggin (HA) and funding from Maine Prevention Services, the Androscoggin Land Trust (ALT) updated their policy in April 2020 after working with HA over 10 years ago to develop their first no-smoking policy. Here's what Dana Little, ALT board president had to say about our work together:

"ALT has had a long-standing policy on not smoking on any of our properties which was written about 10 years ago.

This policy needed revision to reflect current trends in tobacco use with vaping and e-cigarettes. We needed signs to place on our properties where smoking was an issue and the incentive of receipt of free signs motivated our board to update the policy. We now have a policy that covers all tobacco products thanks to this process."



Outcomes

ALT's tobacco policy update will **support their goal to provide quality and safe recreation experiences** for all of their visitors; approximately 770 people attended programming last year, while countless others visit ALT properties in Androscoggin, Oxford, Sagadahoc, and Franklin counties every day. Their process highlights the importance of reviewing and revising tobacco policies as times change to provide everyone, especially young people, with healthy places to visit that are free from exposure to emerging tobacco products like e-cigarettes.

Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey, data found here:
<https://data.mainepublichealth.gov/miyhs/home>

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