

Saddleback Maine goes Tobacco-Free

Saddleback Maine returns to the slopes protecting staff and visitors from second hand smoke with the adoption of a comprehensive tobacco policy.

Saddleback Maine is the largest independent ski area in The East, located on the north western slopes of Saddleback Mountain in Rangeley. After being closed for five years Saddleback opened again with new ownership in December of 2020 with great success, surpassing a goal of 70,000 skier visits! Saddleback Maine is also one of the biggest employers in Franklin County including seasonal employees.

According to 2020 County Health Rankings data 16% of adults in Franklin County are current smokers. Secondhand smoke travels and is harmful to others – in both indoor and outdoor settings. There is no safe level of exposure and most Maine residents believe that people should be protected from secondhand smoke exposure. With large numbers of adults and children working and recreating at Saddleback Maine, HCC staff identified Saddleback as an ideal partner to help protect and promote healthy recreational spaces for our community.

After many conversations and policy drafts HCC staff were able to develop a policy that fit the needs of Saddleback Maine – prohibiting tobacco use on a majority of the property while allowing for a designated smoking area to meet employee needs.



This policy protects not only the tens of thousands of visitors to Saddleback Maine each year but the hundreds of employees. To enforce this policy HCC worked with the local business SignWorks to customize signs communicating the smoke-free message to everyone at the mountain. HCC is proud to support these two local businesses with this partnership.



With new ownership at Saddleback Maine, they were starting from scratch with their operations and policies, HCC staff thought this would be a great opportunity to establish a partnership with the new staff at the mountain. HCC staff connected with Saddleback's new HR director to offer policy technical assistance. With so much on their plate at the mountain this process took many months and HCC staff utilized other outreach opportunities including Flu Vaccine clinics to connect with the staff and discuss policy needs.

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