

Creating a Smoke-free

Community

Berwick Parks and Recreation

Partners for Healthier Communities' Tobacco Prevention Coordinator partnered with Berwick Parks and Recreation Director to implement a 100% smoke-free policy for Berwick parks and places managed by the department.



THE NEED

Although the health risks associated with indoor secondhand smoke are well documented, new research done on exposure to toxic tobacco fumes outdoors has shown its harmful effects as well. Recent publishings in the Journal of the Air and Waste Management Association (JAWMA), concluded that a non-smoker sitting a few feet downwind from a smoldering cigarette is likely to be exposed to substantial levels of contaminated air.

“A person near an outdoor smoker may inhale a breath with 50 times more toxic material than in the surrounding unpolluted air.”

Eliminating secondhand smoke exposure and tobacco use in public, outdoor municipal areas can be an important way to improve public health.

INTERVENTION

With the understanding of secondhand smoke's harmful effects, York County's Tobacco Prevention Coordinator and Berwick's Parks and Recreation Director worked together to develop and implement a smoke-free policy for the safety and health of Berwick community members.

The policy prohibits smoking, and the use of all tobacco products including e-cigarettes, at all of Berwick Parks and Recreation properties. Additionally, the adopted policy prohibits all smoking and the use of all tobacco 24 hours a day, 365 days a year in all Berwick Parks and Recreation department owned, leased and affiliated buildings, department owned or leased properties, at all department permitted or sanctioned events both indoors and outdoors when on town property, and in all department owned, leased or rented vehicles. This smoke and tobacco-free policy applies to all people utilizing Berwick Parks and Recreation space, including organizers of, and attendees at, public events using department owned, leased and affiliated property.

RESULTS

Once the policy was adopted by the town, all Berwick Parks and Recreation properties became smoke-free. These properties include playgrounds, baseball fields, multi-purpose fields, a basketball court, a pavilion, as well as a building for storage and concessions. These areas invite community members to use their space for leisure, sporting events, community-wide and individual events, etc. As they are now 100% smoke-free, community members using the spaces managed by the department can now enjoy doing so in a space with clean air, free of secondhand smoke.

SUSTAINABILITY

The York County Coordinator will continue to offer support to Berwick Parks and Recreation, as they adapt to becoming a smoke-free environment for the town's residents, as well as visitors of their properties.



**MAINE
PREVENTION
SERVICES**

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

Partners for Healthier Communities
bikelly@smhc.org