

# Outdoor Settings

## Why

As more attention is focused on tobacco problems, smoking outdoors is being re-examined. With the proliferation of smokefree air policies and laws indoors, smokers often congregate outdoors, especially at building entrances, where the smoke and the litter become problems. ETS can be a health hazard outdoors, especially for a child with asthma or a person with emphysema sitting among smokers in a ballpark with 70,000 fans in assigned seats. Secondhand smoke can be offensive outdoors.

Some organizations have made their grounds smokefree because they didn't want people to have to walk through a cloud of smoke to enter their buildings. Also, smoke outdoors sometimes becomes smoke indoors, entering buildings through entrances, windows, or air-intake vents. Smoking outdoors poses a fire threat. It can be a burn hazard, especially on beaches, at swimming pools, and in crowded places.

Cigarette butts, packages, and other tobacco-use debris are a source of litter, particularly in outdoor smoking areas or near entrances. The Center for Marine Conservation found cigarette butts to be the largest single source of beach trash, representing 17 percent of all trash, in its 1995 study in 33 states. Cigarette butts are

routinely tossed on the ground almost everywhere outdoors; ashtrays are emptied in parking areas or dumped out the windows of moving cars.

Eliminating smoking outdoors helps educate children, by providing examples of more smokefree places. Smokefree outdoor places encourage health for all, instead of enabling addiction. Alcohol use is forbidden in many public places outdoors, at playgrounds, outdoor family concerts, and other events. People are required to clean up after their dogs outdoors. Now smoking prohibitions are joining those rules.

Many professional and amateur sports stadiums are smokefree, including almost all of the 28 major league baseball stadiums. Aloha Stadium, site of the University of Hawaii football games, the NFL Pro Bowl, Hawaii's professional soccer team, and numerous other events, is smokefree in its 50,000 seats. Skylands Park, the 4,000-seat stadium that is home to New Jersey's minor league baseball Cardinals, made its seating smokefree because smokers were leaving hundreds of cigarette butts all over the place, according to Robert Hilliard, president of the Skylands Park management (*New Jersey Herald*, August 3, 1995). He added, "This is a family place. The kids don't need to be around it."

Hyland Hills Ski Area of Bloomington, Minnesota is preparing to eliminate smoking outdoors. Mike Draeger, the man-

SMOKEFREE AIR  
*Everywhere*

ager, told the *New York Times* (January 25, 1996), "The whole reason for teaching kids about skiing is about the benefits of being outdoors. But right now, people are walking outdoors, and the deck is a cloud of smoke." Team Gilboa, a group of 300 5-19 year olds, uses Hyland Hills as its winter training site. Its summer training site is Timberline Lodge Ski Area in Oregon, which has already banned smoking in its lift areas. Timberline's director of skiing operations, Steve Kruse, reports that "complaints about smoking greatly out-weighed any complaint about no smoking." Both resorts were also concerned about cigarette butts "all over the place."

The Pine Valley Golf Club, which has been ranked as the number one golf course in the world by *Golf* magazine, banned smoking on the course. "We started posting 'No Smoking' on the board when the weather conditions became so dry that we were afraid of fire," said club manager Charles Raudenbush. Then the club noticed how much cleaner the course was (cigarette filters are not biodegradable) and that costs for picking up cigarette litter were reduced. So the policy became permanent at the New Jersey club where former Presidents Eisenhower and Ford plus other well known golfers, including Bob Hope, have played. The club's restaurant is also smokefree.

Sharon, Massachusetts has banned smoking at ballfields, parks, and public beaches. Honolulu City Council banned smoking on Hanauma Bay beach, Honolulu Zoo, and the Koko Crater Botanical Garden. Clayton, California bans smoking in parks and outdoor sports

facilities, except golf courses. Bellaire, Texas, a suburb of Houston, is trying to live up to its name; it has banned smoking anywhere in the city's public park system. In New Jersey, Mt. Olive bans smoking in recreation areas; Clinton Township, Belleville, and Cedar Grove ban smoking in playgrounds; Sussex County bans smoking near government building entrances.

Davis and Palo Alto, California, forbid smoking within 20 feet of entrances of buildings open to the public and at public service areas like bus stops. New York City bans smoking outdoors at schools and children's institutions, open air theaters, seating and standing areas at commercial outdoor sports and recreational areas including racetracks, and outdoor waiting areas and service lines.

Two counties in tobacco-growing Maryland were considering banning smoking and chewing of tobacco in all publicly owned areas, according to a May 5, 1996 *New York Times* report. At least nine states require all public schools to be smokefree, indoors and outdoors. The Texas Board of Criminal Justice authorized a complete ban on tobacco use both indoors and outdoors, effective March 1995, for 100,000 inmates and 50,000 employees.

The Mayo Clinic does not allow smoking anywhere on its property, nor does Alina Lodge, a drug treatment program in New Jersey. Overlook Hospital, Summit, New Jersey, has a smokefree perimeter surrounding the hospital. Schering-Plough pharmaceutical company in Kenilworth, New Jersey, has made its grounds, including the parking lot, smokefree.



(Please see the Public Places section and the Smokefree Workplaces and Public Places lists for more information.)

## How

Outdoor smokefree policies are the newest development in smokefree policies and, probably, the most likely to generate controversy, or at least surprise. When the Friendship Heights, Maryland Village Council passed its outdoor smoking ban in the autumn of 1996, the law had to be approved by the Montgomery County Council (because the Village is unincorporated). At press time, the Village Council did not have enough votes on the County Council to uphold the law. Council Member Patricia Forkan responded to critics who said they may have gone too far by saying, "It was probably equally strange when somebody suggested seat belts." (*Washington Post*, October 16, 1996)

Extra preparation and public information may be needed for outdoor smokefree policies. An abundance of signs is appropriate, both because the policy is innovative and the area to be covered by the policy may be large. Nonsmokers are more willing to speak up and inform violators when smokefree policies are well posted, according to several studies.

Neighbors need to be taken into consideration. Some schools that have made their grounds smokefree have found that neighbors become burdened by illicit smoking and cigarette debris.

Talk to other organizations like yours that have created smokefree outdoor

policies (some are listed in the Appendices) for their suggestions and support.

Remember, as Council Member Forkan said, seat belts were considered strange at first. So were indoor smokefree policies. Outdoor smokefree policies and laws are working fine in many places.