

Maricopa County Policy Assessment: Smoke-Free Parks

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Executive Summary

The state of Arizona has been active in tobacco-control efforts for over two decades. In 2006, the Smoke-Free Arizona Act (A.R.S. §36-601.01) outlawed smoking within most enclosed public spaces and places of employment primarily to reduce the exposure of individuals to harmful secondhand smoke. The state-wide act “...does not prevent a political subdivision from adopting local ordinances that are more restrictive than the act”, meaning, the act does not preempt local smoke-free laws.

More than 900 local jurisdictions nationwide, including Mesa and Goodyear, Arizona, as well as a few states, have begun to implement policies to make their public outdoor parks and recreation areas smoke-free. With research indicating the health risks of secondhand smoke to adults and children, especially those with asthma or other lung conditions, and the additional burden of the littering of cigarette butts on our environment, the Maricopa County Department of Public Health commissioned this study to determine the feasibility of introducing and implementing similar policies throughout Arizona, and within Maricopa County in particular.

Evaluation Objectives

Four specific objectives guided the project:

1. Identify and summarize the health risks associated with secondhand smoke (SHS) in public parks.
2. Determine the environmental and fiscal impact of tobacco-related litter in public parks.
3. Prepare priority policy alternatives and identify key stakeholders, policy champions and policy promotional tools to consider.
4. Assess the level of public support in Arizona for this policy.

Study Methodology

Data were collected through a multi-method approach consisting of archival data, key informant interviews, and a statewide, telephone-based public opinion survey.

Archival Data

Data were collected from the research literature regarding the health risks and societal and fiscal impacts associated with SHS exposure in public parks. Official and proposed policy language, meeting minutes and recordings, and other documentation were collected to assess smoke-free parks policies both locally and nationwide.

Key Informant Interviews

Eleven key informants participated in face-to-face and/or telephone interviews. These informants, listed below, included lobbyists and legislative liaisons representing county and state-level decision makers as well as community stakeholder groups.

Candace Alexander, COPD/Coalition Manager for Northern Arizona and Mary Kurth, Program Director Arizona COPD Coalition

Colby Bower, Legislative Liaison, Arizona Department of Health Services

Kristin Cippola, Legislative Liaison, County Supervisors Association

Leland Fairbanks, President, Arizonans Concerned About Smoking

Barb Fanning, Director of Government Affairs, Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association (AzHHA)

Stuart Goodman, Principal, Goodman Schwartz Public Affairs

Bryan Hummel, Arizona Director of Government Relations, American Cancer Society

Rebecca Nevedale, Associate Director, Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AzAAP)

Nicole Olmstead, Government Relations Director, American Heart Association Arizona

Christian Stumfd, Regional Director of Government Relations, American Lung Association

Brianne Westmore, State Director of Program Services, March of Dimes

Telephone Public Poll Surveys

A telephone-based public opinion survey was conducted to assess statewide attitudes, beliefs, and preferences related to a smoke-free parks policy. The survey was designed and conducted in coordination with the Behavior Research Center and included both landline and cellular telephones. Interviews were conducted in both English and Spanish with 710 adult heads of household throughout Arizona, including 423 Maricopa County residents, using Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) techniques. Survey responses are weighted by county, political party and age in order to be more representative of all Arizonans.

Policy Alternatives

Assessment of policy alternatives included consideration of the following:

- 1) Policy level (state, county, city)
- 2) Policy type, coverage and venues included
- 3) Enforcement standards and mechanisms
- 4) Designated smoking areas

Key Findings

- Secondhand smoke concentrations in outdoor areas can reach similar levels as those found indoors.
- Tobacco litter makes up more than one-third of all visible litter and 25-50% of all litter collected from streets and roadways, and can cost cities between \$0.5 million and \$6.5 million dollars.
- More than 9 in 10 Arizonans agree that secondhand smoke is harmful.
- More than 8 in 10 Arizonans feel that smoking should be restricted in public parks, but only 18 percent feel that it should be banned completely.
- Successfully passing a smoke-free parks policy through the Arizona legislature would be exceedingly difficult.
- Support for smoke-free parks policies might increase if e-cigarettes were included in the ban.
- There is broad stakeholder support for smoke-free parks policies.

Policy Recommendations

1. Put together a coalition of stakeholders to further discuss the issue.
2. Implement policies at the local level.
3. Consider taking a stepwise approach rather than banning smoking in parks completely.
4. Conduct an educational campaign.
5. Consider putting revenues from policy violations toward signage and park enhancements.

Maricopa County Policy Assessment: Smoke-Free Parks

Overview

The purpose of the Maricopa County Smoke-Free Parks Policy Assessment is three-fold: 1) to evaluate the extent and health impact of tobacco usage in public parks; 2) analyze smoke-free parks policies that have been proposed in cities, counties, and states nationwide; and 3) to assess the feasibility of introducing and implementing similar policies in Arizona, and in Maricopa County in particular.

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Problem Analysis: Health Risks and Extent of the Problem

Quick Facts

National Figures:

- Tobacco smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals and compounds, including hundreds that are toxic and at least 69 that cause cancer.¹
- Secondhand smoke concentrations in outdoor areas can reach similar levels as those found indoors.²
- A typical cigarette contains 9-30mg of nicotine.³ In young children, 1-2mg may be toxic, causing nausea and vomiting in low doses and neurological symptoms with higher doses.⁴ A dose of 9.2mg may be lethal in dogs.⁵
- Teens perceive adult and teen smoking as more acceptable in outdoor gathering areas and report most frequently smoking in such outdoor areas themselves.⁶
- Smoking regulations in public places can significantly reduce both the number of cigarettes consumed by youth and the overall prevalence of tobacco use.⁷
- Research estimates that tobacco litter costs cities anywhere between \$0.5 million and \$6 million dollars, depending on city size.⁸
- Smoking-related fires cost the U.S. approximately \$6.95 billion in one year.⁹
- Direct medical costs from exposure to SHS among U.S. children exceed \$700 million per year.¹⁰
- Cigarette butts make up 36% of all visible litter and 25-50% of all collected litter items from roadways and streets.¹¹
- Cigarette butts are non-biodegradable and can persist in the environment for 10-15 years.¹²
- More than 900 cities and counties nationwide have banned smoking in public parks.

Arizona Figures:

- Asthma is a deadly chronic disease that affects the lives of more than 600,000 Arizonans.¹³ Tobacco smoke is a trigger for asthma attacks.¹⁴
- Metro Phoenix is in the top 5 large U.S. cities for asthma-related deaths.¹⁵
- Arizona's fire danger season is 6 months long (May-October). Among U.S. states, Arizona ranked fourth in 2013 for most wildfires and 10th for most acres burned by wildfires.¹⁶ Cigarettes are a known cause of wildfires.¹⁷

Background

Smoking, including exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS), is the single leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States and places a high burden on society.¹⁸ **Secondhand smoke** is defined as tobacco smoke that is exhaled by smokers or given off by burning tobacco products and inhaled by persons nearby. Secondhand smoke that occurs outdoors is often referred to as outdoor tobacco smoke (OTS).

It is well-documented that SHS exposure at any age causes significant adverse physical conditions such as cardiovascular diseases¹⁹, upper and lower respiratory tract infections such as the common cold, middle-ear disease, bronchitis, pneumonia, and other bacterial infections²⁰, as well as several types of cancer.²¹ Evidence is now sufficient to conclude that SHS exposure causes stroke as well.²² The U.S. Surgeon General recently released a report stating that **there is no risk-free level of exposure to involuntary SHS**.²³

Beyond their mortality and morbidity impacts, cigarette smoking and SHS exposure have significant fiscal impacts as well; they are associated with considerable economic losses to society and place a substantial burden on the US health-care system.²⁴ Cigarette smoking and exposure to SHS result in approximately 443,000 deaths and \$193 billion in direct health-care expenditures and productivity losses each year.²⁵ Direct medical costs from exposure to SHS among U.S. children exceed \$700 million per year.²⁶ However, there is strong evidence that the implementation of **smoke-free policies can help to reduce both the negative health impacts and the fiscal costs of smoking and SHS exposure to society**.^{27, 28}

Studies have found that levels of SHS in *outdoor* areas can be equal to amounts found inside where smoking is allowed.²⁹ To completely avoid exposure to SHS in an outdoor area, a person may have to move as far as 25 feet from the person who is smoking — equivalent to the width of a two-lane road.³⁰ Local and state governments have the legal right to adopt laws to protect residents' health and safety. This authority enables communities to adopt smoke-free laws to reduce exposure to harmful SHS.

Tobacco smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals and compounds, including hundreds that are toxic and at least 69 that cause cancer.³¹ As with smoking indoors, exposure to concentrated amounts of SHS outdoors can cause respiratory irritation and may trigger asthma attacks.³² Cigarettes, once consumed in public spaces, are often discarded on the ground requiring additional maintenance expenses, diminishing the beauty of communities' recreational facilities, and posing a risk to toddlers and animals due to ingestion. Communities throughout the United States are creating smoke-free outdoor recreational policies out of concern for the health of their citizens and their environments.

Health Risks of SHS Exposure

Secondhand smoke can have a significant negative effect on the cardiovascular system, similar to the impact on active smokers, and increases the risk of heart disease by approximately 30 percent.³³ Past and present exposure to SHS in childhood causes a direct and irreversible damage to the structure of the arteries, which puts exposed children at an increased risk for heart attack and stroke later in life.

The 2014 Surgeon General report stated that **5.6 million children alive today will ultimately die early as a result of SHS exposure.** Despite these facts, approximately two out of every three (66%) children ages 3-11 are involuntarily exposed to SHS, and about 25% of all U.S. children live with one or more persons who smoke.³⁴ SHS is particularly detrimental to children and adolescents' physical health due to their developing and immature immune systems, and to their respiratory systems due to smaller airways and greater demand for oxygen.³⁵ On average, lung development and growth continues well into the late adolescent years for females and early 20's for males.³⁶

Children exposed to tobacco smoke are at an increased risk for short-term and long-term physical health effects which include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS);³⁷
- Ear infections³⁸;
- Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV);³⁹
- Respiratory tract infections;
- Respiratory complications, induction and exacerbation of asthma;⁴⁰
- Increased risk of current and incessant wheeze;⁴¹
- Slowing lung growth;⁴²
- Decreased lung function;
- Meningitis;
- Otitis media;
- Dental decay;
- Stunted physical growth;
- Metabolic syndrome;⁴³
- Higher levels of nicotine-dependent symptoms,⁴⁴ and more.

While exposure to SHS is also well-known risk factor for cancer, emerging evidence suggests it may also be associated with childhood cancers,⁴⁵ such as nasal sinus cancer and breast cancer in young, primarily premenopausal females.⁴⁶

Exposure to SHS has also been linked to mental health issues such as Major Depressive Disorder (MDD), General Anxiety Disorder (GAD), Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and Conduct Disorder (CD), as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders 4th edition (DSM-IV). Involuntary childhood exposure to SHS may also worsen or advance the onset of other mental health symptoms for children and adolescents.⁴⁷

Cigarette Litter in Parks

Cigarette butts are the most commonly littered item in the United States.⁴⁸ Cigarette butts get deposited into streams, creeks, lakes, and rivers through storm drains where they then leach toxins into the waterways, impairing the water quality for aquatic life and the environment.⁴⁹ In the United States, more than 175 million pounds of cigarette butts are discarded every year.⁵⁰

Tobacco product litter, particularly cigarette butts, has been shown to be toxic, slow to decompose, costly to manage, and growing in volume—a trend that appears to be exacerbated by the increased prevalence of indoor smoking bans. Growing concern over cigarette butt litter has prompted states and municipalities to undertake a variety of policy initiatives.

Discarded cigarette butts are a form of non-biodegradable litter, meaning they do not decay and cannot be absorbed by the environment. Thus, cigarette filters pose a serious litter and toxic waste disposal problem. The cigarette filter — the white fluffy stuff that looks like cotton — is actually plastic (cellulose acetate), which can take up to 15 years to decompose.⁵¹ Cellulose acetate is photodegradable but not biodegradable. Although ultraviolet rays from the sun will eventually break the filter into smaller pieces under ideal environmental conditions, the source material never disappears; it essentially becomes diluted in water or soil.⁵²

The Keep America Beautiful (KAB) campaign reported that cigarette butts make up 36% of all visible litter. Cigarettes butts comprise from 25-50% of all collected litter items from roadways and streets.⁵³ Their non-biodegradability means that they also increase landfill demands, add costs to municipalities' waste disposal programs, and create environmental blight in public spaces. Laws establishing smoke-free parks help reduce cigarette butt litter and its effects on the environment by creating cigarette “butt-free zones” where this type of trash will not blight outdoor recreational areas and inadvertently pollute waterways.

Ingestion of Cigarette Litter

Cigarette litter is not only unsightly, but when ingested may be hazardous to the health of humans and animals. Cigarette butts are commonly discarded onto beaches, sidewalks, streets, parks and many other public places where children, domestic animals and wildlife may be exposed to risk of ingestion. Cigarette butts have been shown to leach out numerous into water and may be a continual point source for contamination of aquatic environments after discarding.⁵⁴

Typically, discarded cigarette butts consist of three components: unsmoked remnant tobacco (including partially smoked/charred tobacco on the end), the filter of a filtered cigarette and a paper wrap. Each of these components of the discarded cigarette butt presents its own concerns. Toxic substances are leached from the

filter and tobacco residue⁵⁵ that pollute waterways⁵⁶, and pollute ground water near landfills that are not properly constructed to contain such toxins.⁵⁷

Aquatic life may be harmed by the toxins and the butts may cause physical harm when ingested by animals.⁵⁸ Butts collect in municipal storm drains and then may empty into waterways, and can clog storm drains and sanitary sewer systems. Young children, as well as many sea creatures, birds and pets, are indiscriminate eaters, and ingested plastic trash, including cigarette butts, can choke an animal or poison it with toxins.⁵⁹

Children can easily pick up cigarettes and ingest them in places like parks.⁶⁰ Reports of accidental ingestion of cigarettes (and butts) are not uncommon among children, especially those under age six. Nicotine is the most commonly reported toxic substance causing symptoms among children who have consumed cigarettes or butts. Although a typical cigarette contains from 9 mg to 30 mg of nicotine, the lethal dose after one-time ingestion among children is reported as 40 to 60 mg.⁶¹ Nicotine in tobacco products is rapidly absorbed and nicotine-related symptoms develop rapidly (<4 hours) after ingestion.⁶² These symptoms may include:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Salivation
- Profuse sweating
- Severe poisoning
- Convulsions
- Resting heart rate under 60 beats per minute with hypotension
- Irregular heartbeat, and
- Respiratory depression⁶³

Fortunately, cases of significant toxic poisoning in children from ingesting tobacco-related litter are rare. Most reports and reviews of cigarette and butt ingestion have described few significant toxic responses among children to cigarette or butt consumption, but some have shown severe toxicity with as few as two cigarettes consumed.⁶⁴ Most children who ingest cigarettes do not show any symptoms, according to observations at poison control centers in the U.S.⁶⁵

Symptoms that do appear are usually vomiting or lethargy, both of which eventually cease.⁶⁶ Children do have to be admitted to a hospital's emergency department, but usually are not hospitalized.⁶⁷ Still, children often explore their environment through oral contact or through mimicry of adult behaviors. In young children, 1-2 mg may be toxic, causing nausea and vomiting in low doses, and more extensive neurological symptoms with higher doses.⁶⁸

Although the consequences of cigarette ingestion for children are usually not life-threatening, it is still an unnecessary danger that can be prevented by reducing cigarette litter in public parks and other play areas. Moreover, poison centers emphasize the need to reduce the risk of poisoning by tobacco products. It is clear that smokers must treat cigarette butts as toxic waste products and take more care

in discarding them; children will mimic parental behavior by putting these items into their mouths and could consume them in quantities sufficient to be toxic.⁶⁹

A lethal dose of nicotine in dogs is reported to be 9.2 mg/kg; however, clinical signs have been reported at doses as low as 1 mg/kg. In small dogs, signs can be seen after the ingestion of one cigarette.⁷⁰ With large ingestions, dogs may have a poor prognosis as a result of nicotine toxicity.⁷¹ Pet birds are particularly sensitive to many chemicals due to their small size and very efficient metabolism rate. Curious birds have been reported to ingest cigarette butts and have died as a result.⁷²

Reports of nicotine ingestion in domestic animals are rare; however, ingestion can cause the following symptoms:

- Excessive salivation
- Tremors
- Vomiting
- Lack of coordination
- Weakness
- Convulsions
- Respiratory failure, and
- Death⁷³

Role Modeling Smoking Behaviors

In addition to protecting babies, children, and their family members from drifting SHS while enjoying outdoor sports and other activities at public parks, creating smoke-free parks enables cities, counties, or states to take an important step to encourage healthy behaviors.⁷⁴ Youth smoking initiation is an important public health concern worldwide, considering tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the world today.

While cigarette smoking is highly addictive, individuals who have not initiated smoking by age 21 are unlikely to ever begin. Further, the younger the age when people initiate, the more likely they will become regular smokers and the less likely it is they will ever quit.⁷⁵ Parents, leaders, and officials are role models for children and youth, and can have a positive effect on the lifestyle choices they make.⁷⁶

A recent study⁷⁷ found that almost three-quarters of youth smokers (74%) reported smoking in outdoor gathering places, such as parks, storefronts, or parking lots, and about one-third said they had smoked at recreation centers (31%). In fact, 60% of youth smokers often witnessed adults smoking in outdoor locations, much more often than the next highest rate of 45% for the indoor locations. Additionally, the study found that the more youth and adult smoking was observed in one location, the more youth tobacco users reported smoking there as well.

The high prevalence of adult and youth smoking in outdoor gathering places signifies that bans in these locations may reduce the normative visibility of and opportunities for smoking over and above bans in any indoor location.⁷⁸ Smoking

restrictions have the potential to intervene on a personal level for youth, potentially creating and reinforcing lifelong anti-smoking behavioral values and norms.⁷⁹

Smoke-free environments help adults to model healthy behavior for children and youth, and can encourage people who smoke to smoke less or even quit.⁸⁰ For example, in a tobacco-free environment, coaches, parents, and other role models become tobacco-free role models that send a powerful message to children and youth that tobacco use is not part of a healthy lifestyle.⁸¹

As a result, tobacco free policies establish the community norm that tobacco use is not an acceptable behavior for young people or adults.⁸² Moreover, allowing public tobacco use in public parks may have the following negative consequences:

- Increase the visibility of negative role models to youth;
- Present opportunities for youth to smoke;
- Create opportunities for social, or noncommercial, exchange of tobacco; and
- Suggest a community attitude that tolerates use as normal and acceptable behavior for adults and youth.⁸³

Enacting smoke-free parks policies is a youth prevention strategy that could increase the visibility of positive adult, as well as other youth, role models. Moreover, restricting tobacco use in parks could have the following positive consequences:

- The potential to change the established social norm of tobacco use;
- Fewer negative role models of tobacco use;
- Reduced opportunities for social exchange of tobacco among youth; and
- Changed community attitudes about tobacco use.⁸⁴

Impact of Smoke-Free Policies on Youth Tobacco Use

Policy efforts to restrict public smoking have increased since the 1980s.⁸⁵ Such efforts include state and local restrictions on smoking in public facilities, outdoor spaces, worksites, hospitals, restaurants and bars, hotels, and more.⁸⁶ Researchers have concluded that smoking bans appear to be effective in reducing non-smokers' exposure to SHS.⁸⁷ Additionally, studies have found that imposing strict regulations on smoking in public places can significantly reduce both the number of cigarettes consumed by youth and overall prevalence of tobacco use.⁸⁸

Summary

More than 5 trillion cigarettes are smoked worldwide each year, and all of them are disposed of in some manner.⁸⁹ Cigarette butts comprise an estimated 30% of the total litter (by count) along US shorelines, waterways and on land.⁹⁰ Like other forms of waste, smoked cigarette butts also contribute to greater landfill demands and lead to increased costs of municipalities' waste disposal.⁹¹

Smoke-free policies for outdoor recreational areas do not restrict people from using these community areas; rather, they only ensure that smokers refrain from using tobacco for a short period of time in order to protect the health of community members, especially children, who are using these recreational areas.

People go to parks to play with their children, to participate in sports, or to relax and enjoy the outdoors. Creating smoke-free parks is a way for communities to make outdoor spaces even more conducive to healthy living. Parents, leaders, and officials are role models for youth and can have a positive effect on the lifestyle choices they make.

Smoke-free parks policies are a way for cities, counties, and states to encourage healthy behaviors and make public parks places where people can expect to be free from exposure to harmful air pollutants from SHS.

Policy History: Smoke-Free Parks

Related Arizona Policies

The Smoke-Free Arizona Act: Addressing Outdoor Areas

In November of 2006 Arizona successfully passed the Smoke-Free Arizona Act, Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) §36-601.01. The requirements of the act with regard to outdoor areas are as follows:

Smoking is allowed outdoors as long as smoking occurs at least 20 feet away from entrances, open windows, and ventilation systems of enclosed public places and places of employment where smoking is prohibited, unless defined differently by a local ordinance.

In addition, the act specifically states that tobacco use is allowed in parks but that it is necessary for residents to check with their local parks or outdoor recreational areas to find out if the city has a stricter smoking ordinance, as exemplified by Goodyear and Mesa, Arizona. **Cities, counties, and other entities and property owners are specifically given legal authority to adopt more restrictive smoke-free policies** through the following Act components:

(D) Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, an owner, operator, manager, or other person or entity in control of an establishment, facility, or outdoor area may declare that entire establishment, facility, or outdoor area as a nonsmoking place.

(M) This section does not prevent a political subdivision of the state from adopting ordinances or regulations that are more restrictive than this section nor does this section repeal any existing ordinance or regulation that is more restrictive than this section.

Arizona Smoke-Free Parks Policy Initiatives: Bullhead City

On May 20, 2014, the Bullhead City Council unanimously rejected a plea by youth from the Boys and Girls Club of the Colorado River to issue a city-wide smoke-free parks policy. Councilmembers' primary concerns centered on expected challenges of enforcement. Additionally, councilmembers expressed concern about government intrusion and beliefs that SHS in parks was not harmful because parks are not enclosed areas.

Arizona Smoke-Free Parks Policy Initiatives: Gilbert

In 2009 the Gilbert Parks Board formally suggested that the town council adopt a smoking ban in city parks; however, the council did not approve it at the time. One former Parks Board member reported that the council at the time was not comfortable imposing smoking regulations on everyone; rather, they felt that the public could self-regulate without a governmental policy in place. Additionally, the council expressed concern about logistics such as enforcement and difficulties identifying the specific locations where smoking would be prohibited.

Instead, Gilbert has posted signs requesting that patrons refrain from smoking in some of their sports and youth-focused recreation areas (e.g., ballparks, skate parks, etc.). The city's primary focus has been on skate parks. As there is no ordinance, they rely on voluntary compliance by park patrons, which one staff member reported was somewhat effective yet also mentioned that the city continues to receive complaints about people smoking in parks and recreational areas.

The only smoking in parks ban Gilbert has yet been able to codify has been for youth under age 18 since smoking among this population is already illegal. Park rangers have the authority to issue citations to violators of this policy and to recommend participation in town diversion programs.

Some members of the Gilbert Town Council have recently expressed an interest in prohibiting the use of e-cigarettes in certain locations, such as inside public buildings. Given this interest and that there is a different council now than there was in 2009 when the smoking in parks ban was first discussed, the smoking in parks policy may surface again in Gilbert in the near future.

Arizona Smoke-Free Parks Policy Initiatives: Goodyear (policy adopted)

Effective July 1, 2009, Goodyear, Arizona adopted a city ordinance that banned smoking in all parks in the city of Goodyear. The smoke-free ordinance was introduced by Jim Nichols, former Deputy City Manager, after city officials administratively declared Goodyear Ballpark a smoke-free venue.

In support of the policy, Nichols argued that: 1) the ordinance was necessary to reduce SHS exposure and tobacco-related litter, and 2) the city of Goodyear already had smoking bans for indoor public buildings, therefore affording the City Council the authority to adopt a smoke-free parks ordinance as well.

At the Council hearing on the policy, Nichols stated that implementing a smoke-free parks policy did not require an ordinance; rather it could be adopted either administratively or through an amendment to their current smoking ordinance.

Nichols further commented that once the policy change was adopted, it would be necessary to engage in a public education campaign so that the community members would understand the change in the rules and policy. Additionally, he suggested the use of proper signage to raise awareness of the policy.

Enforcement of the policy falls primarily on park staff and volunteers who are responsible for informing violators of the smoke-free rule. While there are no fines associated with policy violations, repeat offenders could be removed from the parks by the local police for trespassing and failure to follow the city rules.

A current representative of Goodyear Parks and Recreation reported that the city has experienced little to no concern over the smoke-free parks policy in recent years and that the policy has resulted in less cigarette litter spread throughout the park. The biggest reported policy impact is that families and patrons of all ages are able to enjoy the park in a safe environment that promotes healthy lifestyles.

Arizona Smoke-Free Parks Policy Initiatives: Mesa (policy adopted)

Mesa City Code, Title 6, Chapter 11: *Smoking regulations and healthier smokefree environments* states the following:

Since the active smoking of tobacco and the inhalation of environmental tobacco smoke (ETS) are dangers to human health and the most prevalent cause of preventable death, disease, and disability, as well as are annoyances, inconveniences, discomforts, and general health hazards to those who are involuntarily exposed to such, and in order to serve the public health, safety, and welfare, the declared purpose of this Chapter is to protect people from dangerous, unnecessary, and/or involuntary health risks by prohibiting the smoking of tobacco or any other plant in City or public places and places of employment, as defined in this Chapter. (2112,195-1)

The code further defines “public place” as:

Any area available to, and customarily used by, the public, including areas closed in by a roof and walls with openings for ingress and egress, and any areas used for public gatherings where persons are seated, standing, or otherwise there for a common purpose such as attendance at or waiting lines for events in a park, amphitheater, stadium, or other assembly area so designated or allowed by the City of Mesa for a legal event.

This policy was passed and codified in 1996. A former Mesa staff person who was involved in passing the ordinance reported that some of the concerns that were raised during discussion of the policy included questions of enforcement and the specific areas in which smoking would be restricted. The city did not want to make it so restrictive that smokers could not find somewhere in the area to smoke. Yet, the high level of activity among youth in city sports and recreation areas and the problems associated with SHS during special events, such as games or concerts, from which there was no escape, was sufficient reason to pass the policy.

The full Mesa policy and an example sign from one of Mesa’s dog parks are available in Appendix A.

Arizona Smoke-Free Parks Policy Initiatives: Phoenix

The city of Phoenix restricts smoking in parks and mountain preserve areas when there is a risk of fires. The city code reads as follows:

24-42 Restrictions on smoking and fires in parks and mountain preserve areas.

A. No person shall smoke or start a fire in a park or mountain preserve area where one or more signs are posted prohibiting such activity.

B. The Director of the Parks and Recreation Department is authorized to post signs prohibiting smoking and fires in parks and mountain preserve areas when there is a risk of fire becoming uncontrolled due to dry vegetation or climatic conditions.

C. "Smoke" or "smoking" means the burning of any tobacco or other plant product.

A veteran park ranger in the Phoenix South Mountain Preserve Area reported that the city bans smoking in the park outside of an enclosed vehicle year-round due to the fragile nature of the area. Still, approximately 40-50% of the litter rangers and groundskeepers pick up daily is related to cigarettes. The ranger estimated that staff would have an additional 1-2 hours of time daily to support other duties if cigarette litter was not an issue.

The smoking ban is enforced whenever park rangers are able to make contact with people smoking outside of their vehicles, but the department's lack of resources and the size of the areas they patrol make enforcement challenging.

Arizona Smoke-Free Parks Policy Initiatives: Yavapai

On several occasions in 2014, local youth from the Yavapai Anti-Tobacco Coalition of Youth (Y.A.T.C.Y.) collected tobacco litter from both Garrison and River Front Parks in Cottonwood, Arizona to raise awareness and educate the community about their advocacy efforts to support smoke-free parks.

The youth argued that smoke-free parks policies are necessary to protect people from the harmful impact of SHS exposure, reduce tobacco-related litter, and to prevent the ingestion of tobacco-related litter by infants and children. Advocacy efforts included reaching out to community members for support, traveling to the State Capitol to educate legislators on their initiative, and administering public poll surveys to show local support for tobacco-free parks.

Arizona Smoke-Free Parks Policy Initiatives: Other

Youth anti-tobacco coalitions, including several chapters of Students Taking a New Direction (STAND) AZ, are working with cities and state legislators across Arizona to implement smoke-free parks policies. Advocacy efforts, both in Arizona and nationwide, have included presenting tobacco use and litter data at city council meetings as well as bags full of cigarette litter collected from local parks.

Fire Restrictions on Public Land

As a result of increased fire danger and to prevent human-caused wildfires and protect public health and safety, the state forester is obligated to issue fire restrictions, when necessary. This statute is under A.R.S., Chapter 2.1, Article 2, 37-623 and is entitled: *Suppression of wildfires; powers and duties of state forester; entry on private lands.*

The statute provides the state forester with:

...the authority to prevent and suppress any wildfires on state and private lands located outside incorporated municipalities and, if subject to cooperative agreements, on other lands located in this state or in other states, Mexico or Canada.

Tobacco-related restrictions are included under the statute, with the exception of the following: within an enclosed vehicle, building, developed campground, or in an area at least 10 feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials.

Other States and Counties: Policies Passed

Over the last decade, smoke-free parks policies have become increasingly popular. Policies providing smoke-free outdoor areas have doubled since 2008 and there are currently approximately 2,600 such policies in place.⁹² As of April 2014, there are more than 900 municipalities in the U.S., as well as Oklahoma, Maine, and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico that have enacted smoke-free parks policies (Figure 1). Additionally, approximately 90 municipalities are currently considering and investigating policy initiatives regarding smoke-free parks.⁹³

Among these 900 municipalities are some of the U.S.'s major metropolitan areas, which include Atlanta, GA; Austin, TX; Boston, MA; Miami/Dade County, FL; New York, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Salt Lake City, UT; San Francisco, CA; and Seattle, WA. Similarly, nearly 200 municipalities have passed smoke-free beach laws.⁹⁴

A complete list of municipalities/states with smoke-free parks policies is available in Appendix B.

A recent study⁹⁵ suggested that smoke-free park policies exist primarily in young, urban, educated, and liberal-voting communities. However, it has been suggested that there will be heightened pressure for smoke-free parks in a more diverse range of locations in the future.

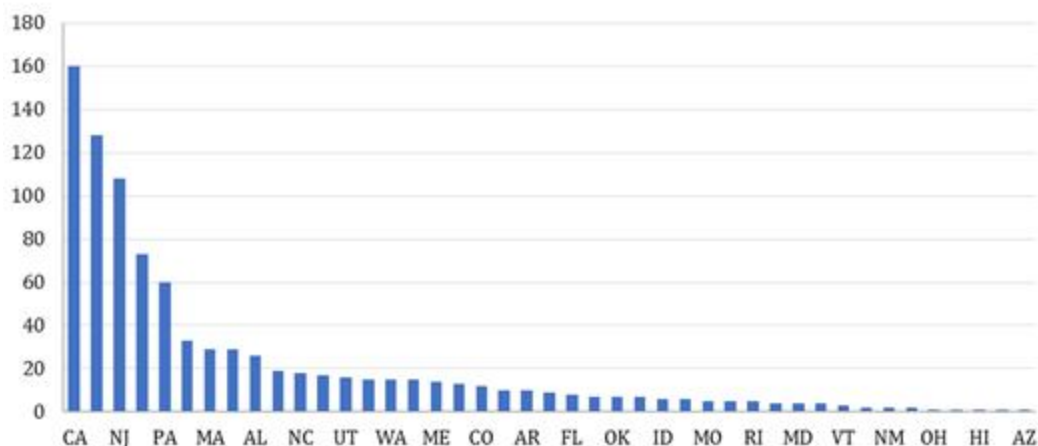


Figure 1. Municipalities with Smoke-Free Parks by State

Table 1 provides examples of state, county, and city level policies prohibiting the smoking of tobacco products in public parks.

Table 1. Examples of adopted smoke- or tobacco-free parks policies.

State/Locality	Coverage Area	Sponsor	Enforcement	Penalties
Commonwealth of Puerto Rico	Park, tennis, swimming pool, meeting video or pinball machines, stadium, coliseum, or designated area or place commonly used for holding gaming activities, entertainment, amusement or passive recreation, competition or sports, professional and amateur events.	Lead Sponsor— Senators Benítez, Popular Democratic Party (PDP); Co-Sponsor(s)— 18 New Progressive Party (NPP) and 1 PDP	N/A	Violation may result in administrative fines up to \$250. Fines up to \$500 for a second violation and up to \$2,000 for subsequent violations.
Hartsville, SC	Amphitheaters, ball parks and stadiums during athletic competitions of public performances, parades and special events on public streets and city property, and city owned parks, not including city owned parking lots.	N/A	Office of the city manager or an authorized designee; law enforcement; an owner, manager, operator, or employee of an establishment regulated by this article.	Violators are guilty of an infraction, punishable by fines between \$10-25. Repeated violations may result in the suspension or revocation of any occupancy permit or business license issued to the person for the premises on which the violation occurred.
Maine	Within 20 feet of a beach, playground, snack bar, group picnic shelter, business facility, enclosed area, public place or restroom in a state park or state historic site.	Lead Sponsor— Senator Nutting VII (D); Co-Sponsor(s)— 7 (D)	Not available	Not available
Oklahoma	Tobacco and e-cigarette use is banned in all properties owned, leased or contracted for use by the State, including all buildings, land and vehicles.	Executive Orders signed by Governor	Not available	Not available
St. Joseph County, IN	All St. Joseph County, city, township and town municipally owned, leased and/or operated parks and recreational areas.		Peer enforcement; Department of Health (complaints)	Fines as determined by the Department of Health or disorderly conduct charge by law enforcement for repeated non-compliance.

Policy Champions and Opponents of Legislation Passed

Arguments against smoke-free parks generally fall into three broad categories:

1. The policies are supported by insufficient health evidence
2. The policies are anti-smoker, not anti-smoking
3. Concerns about government reach as a “nanny state”

However, champions have counteracted such arguments with the negative health impact and risks associated with SHS exposure in public parks as well as the impacts of cigarette litter, which can be costly to both the environment and to local governments.

For the states that failed to pass the legislation to adopt smoke-free public parks, many failed to pass throughout various stages of the legislative process, including:

- Failed to get assigned to a standing committee(s);
- Assigned to multiple standing committees;
- Did not get heard in a standing committee(s);
- Never made it out of a standing committee(s);
- Went through the committee and came out with a do not pass; and/or
- Failed to pass either the House or Senate chambers.

Champions

Champions of smoke-free parks policies across the country have included:

- NYC Coalition for a Smoke-Free City
- American Nonsmokers’ Rights Foundation (ANRF)
- Partnership For A Tobacco-Free Maine
- American Lung Association
- American Cancer Society
- The Cayuga County Tobacco Free Coalition
- Prevention Network: Promoting Health Lifestyles
- YMCA
- Partnership for Results
- Illinois Association of Park Districts
- Tobacco-Free Youth Recreation
- The Association of Non-Smokers- Minnesota
- Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
- H.E.A.R.T. Coalition
- Tobacco-Free Chattanooga
- Boston Public Health Commission
- POW’R Against Tobacco

Opponents

Opponents of smoke-free parks policies across the county have included:

- New York City C.L.A.S.H. (Citizens Lobbying Against Smoker Harassment)
- Cigar Rights of America
- The California Department of Parks and Recreation (oppose because of the cost to post signs)
- Commonwealth Brands (Tobacco company)
- My Smokers' Rights
- FORCES International
- National Smokers Alliance (NSA)
- Committee to Preserve Property Rights
- Citizens Against Government Interference
- Tobacco Companies
- Tobacco users

Analysis of Policy Alternatives

Key Policy Components

Among cities, counties and states that have enacted smoke-free parks policies, the scope of the policies have varied significantly. Thus, the following policy components must be taken into consideration:

- 1) Policy level (state, county, city)
- 2) Policy type, coverage and venues included
- 3) Enforcement standards and mechanisms
- 4) Designated smoking areas

Based on similar legislation passed in other states and counties as well as interviews with key stakeholders in Arizona, this study assessed the following policy components and alternatives.

Policy Level

State

There are several entities that can adopt a smoke-free parks policy at the state level. First, the state legislature could adopt a law making all public parks and recreational areas smoke-free or certain types of recreational areas smoke-free. Alternatively, legislators could pass a law to make only state-owned parks smoke-free, leaving city and county park decisions to the respective local governments. Finally, given the stipulations set forth in the Smoke Free Arizona Act as previously outlined, the Arizona State Parks Board could pass the policy by adopting a rule or regulation about smoking in state-owned parks.⁹⁶ This policy would then be written into the state's Administrative Code.

Arizona Administrative Code is made up of the rules and regulations adopted by each state agency, board, or commission. Each agency makes its own rules and procedures for policy and program implementation within the guidelines of the state statute as determined by the state legislature.

City or County

The second approach to adopting a smoke-free parks policy is at the county or city level. With this policy option, elected officials, such as a city council or board of supervisors, can adopt a local law or ordinance to make all public parks or recreational areas in that city or county smoke free.

Many cities and counties also have Parks Commissions in place that could be approached to recommend that the city council or county board of supervisors adopt a smoke-free policy. Parks Commissions are citizen advisory groups that are tasked with advising the decision making body for the cities or counties with regard to parks and natural resources, but they do not usually have the authority to adopt policies on their own accord.

Policy Type, Coverage and Venues Included

There have been predominately three types of policy approaches/types to consider when initiating smoke-free parks legislation, varying from low to full coverage:

- Youth-centered policy (least coverage)
 - Youth Activities
 - Youth Facilities
- Facility-based policy (moderate coverage)
 - High-traffic areas
- Comprehensive policy (full coverage)
 - Entire park systems
 - Minimal exemptions

Additionally, a 'listing approach' is often utilized, which instead of prohibiting smoking in all public parks specifically lists the places where smoking is prohibited. This approach allows a community more flexibility in terms of where smoking can be prohibited and allows for communities to gradually expand their smoke-free outdoor areas over time.

Ordinances specifically stating locations in which tobacco use is prohibited typically include the following:

- Parks
- Playgrounds (or 25ft from)
- Skateboard/bike parks
- Hiking trails
- Public golf courses
- Community centers
- Major events held in parks
- Beaches
- Entrances to park buildings and facilities
- Picnic areas, pavilions, and canopies
- Athletic fields and bleachers
- Concession areas where you can purchase food and other items

Enforcement Standards and Mechanisms

Few localities with smoke-free parks policies have reported issues with regard to enforcement. For example, New York City's Park and Recreation Department states on their website that the ordinance is predominately self-enforced,⁹⁷ although the park rangers issued 212 violations within the first year of enacting the ordinance.⁹⁸

A 2008 survey reported that municipal officials in California with smoke-free parks policies indicated that nearly 80% of the municipalities did not have challenges with compliance. Moreover, 70% of the officials surveyed reported that their respective municipalities' smoke-free park policies were favored by the general public.⁹⁹

However, it is equally important for policy makers to consider the policy's enforcement mechanisms when developing and adopting a smoke-free policy. Some research has suggested that such policies are predominately self-enforcing; however, an official enforcement mechanism, even if just a contingency, is often still necessary. These official enforcement mechanisms can vary from the local police, park rangers/staff, park volunteers, or a combination of the above.

Additionally, policy makers will need to consider whether or not the smoke-free parks policy will be enforced with fines and, if so, the appropriate amount for the fines. On the low end, such as in New York City, the fines are \$50 and enforced by the NYC Park Rangers.¹⁰⁰ In Boston, the fines are \$250 per offense and enforced by the Boston Police Department.¹⁰¹ In San Francisco, fines range from \$100 to \$500, dependent on whether or not it is a first or repeat offense. In Atlanta and Austin, fines range from \$1,000 and \$2,000, respectively, and can be classified as misdemeanors.^{102,103} Alternatively, Seattle opted to ban violators from the premises of public parks for 24 hours rather than assess fines.¹⁰⁴

Designated Smoking Areas in Public Parks

For many cities, counties, and states with smoke-free parks, debate has centered on whether or not there should be designated areas to use tobacco products. Some municipalities have restricted smoking in all recreation areas with no designated smoking areas, making public parks entirely smoke-free environments.

Other municipalities have restricted tobacco use in all public parks except in designated smoking areas, which are often located in parking lots.

In addition to assessing various alternatives among these key policy components, this study assessed:

1. The amount of organizational support for the policy
2. Barriers to policy adoption and implementation
3. Counter-arguments to identified barriers and suggested strategies for framing the policy issue
4. Estimates of the likelihood that the policy is successfully adopted
5. Arizonans' opinions and beliefs surrounding the policy

Findings from Key Stakeholder Interviews

Policy Support

Most organizations interviewed were generally supportive of a smoke-free parks policy, although none specified that it was a high priority issue for them at this time.

The Heart, Lung and Cancer Associations are all supportive of issues that are more restrictive on tobacco use around kids and generally engage in all tobacco policy

efforts together. The Heart Association indicated that because it supports smoke-free environments it would be willing to lead the effort on smoke-free parks as long as the Lung and Cancer Associations were on board and in agreement, as both organizations indicated that they were.

Several of the organizations interviewed indicated needing to know: 1) who else was on board, 2) how much community support there is around this issue, 3) the official language of the policy, and 4) the knowledge and strength of the policy’s sponsor, prior to committing to put in the time and effort to move the issue forward.

Some stakeholders indicated that their groups’ support of the policy might increase if the ban included e-cigarettes as well.

Table 2. Organizational support for smoke-free parks policies

Supporters	Probable Supporters	Neither Support nor Oppose
American Heart Association	Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association	Arizona Association of Chiefs of Police
American Cancer Society	Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics	
American Lung Association	March of Dimes	
Arizonans Concerned About Smoking	Children’s Action Alliance	
	Arizona COPD Coalition	

Reasons organizations would support the policy include:

- Supportive of smoke-free environments and tobacco restrictions, especially around children
- Reduced tobacco-related harm to children
- Children learn from modeling others’ behaviors so the fewer places children can see people smoking the better
- Reduced wildfires

Barriers

Opposition to government regulation of smoke-free parks typically falls under two broad themes: 1) the policies are supported by insufficient health evidence; and 2) the “nanny state” or “civil liberties” arguments.

Indeed, stakeholders suggested the following as being the primary barriers to expect in an attempt to pass a smoke-free parks policy:

- Belief that such a policy is an infringement upon personal freedoms (“nanny state” or “personal liberties” argument)
- Uncertain science
- Lack of concern about SHS in outdoor, open areas
- Parks are a public, open space for everyone (including smokers) to enjoy
- The culture of Arizona as a libertarian state
- Finding a republican sponsor to introduce it
- Concerns about the challenges of enforcement
- Diminishing returns from increasingly restrictive tobacco policies
- Lack of organizations and policy makers among whom this policy is considered a high priority issue
- How will e-cigarettes be addressed? (suggestion to include them in the ban)

The **nanny state argument** conveys a view that the government and/or its policies are overprotective or interfering unduly with personal choice, particularly with those related to private and personal behaviors.

Civil liberties arguments relate to the right to privacy and personal liberty, and claim that certain policies are government infringements upon personal freedom. This argument suggests that there are personal guarantees and freedoms that the government cannot abridge, either by law or by judicial interpretation.

While opposition from the tobacco industry was mentioned as a potential barrier, for the most part, stakeholders did not anticipate that this policy effort would receive much institutional opposition, and certainly would not have nearly as much money raised against it as was used against Smoke-Free Arizona.

Policy Framing

Stakeholders suggested that the best strategies for framing the issue and best counter-arguments to the barriers listed include:

- Arizona has already set a strong precedent that SHS should not involuntarily impact others (e.g., Smoke-Free Arizona)
- Arizona also has a strong precedent for protecting children from harm (e.g., child abuse laws, child restraint laws, children are not allowed to smoke tobacco and are banned from adult bookstores, etc.)
- Governments are wasting too many taxpayer dollars on cleaning up tobacco-related litter in public parks
- Cigarettes (and e-cigarettes) are a fire hazard to which Arizona is especially vulnerable
- Children are considered vulnerable persons who require additional protections
- Several other localities have already passed smoke-free parks policies, including the state of Oklahoma and Mesa and Goodyear, AZ

- Air quality in Arizona is already bad; smoking makes it even worse and kids and bystanders are negatively impacted
- The freedoms of smokers should not overrule the freedoms of others to breathe clean air
- The point is not to infringe on personal freedoms but to protect children from harm, reduce fire hazards, improve the cleanliness of public properties, and decrease costs

Finally, stakeholders suggested that policy advocates:

- Present strong scientific evidence as well as personal stories;
- Involve youth in advocacy efforts, such as by conducting cigarette litter clean-ups and presenting the results at policy hearings; and
- Frame the policy as educational in intent rather than punitive.

Projections for Successful Policy Adoption

Most stakeholders agreed that **smoke-free parks policies should be attempted at the local (city/county) level**. Indeed, one stakeholder mentioned that the model for smoke-free parks has all been local until you hit a critical mass and go statewide. Another suggested that once Phoenix, Tempe, Mesa and Tucson are on board, Arizona will have reached something of a tipping point to head toward a statewide policy.

A few stakeholders suggested attempting the policy through the state legislature, although there was no consensus as to whether the policy should be run simultaneously with the smoking in vehicles with minors policy or before/after. Stakeholders did, however, agree that **successfully passing the policy through the legislature would be quite challenging**.

Those who gave the bill a higher chance of passing stated that it depended on several things including:

- 1) Who the Speaker of the House and President of the Senate are at the time the bill is introduced;
- 2) Who chairs the committee(s) to which the bill is assigned;
- 3) Who is elected Governor; and
- 4) Who sponsors the bill.

A strong, conservative sponsor raises the chances of the bill passing exponentially. Additionally, a few stakeholders pointed out that there is a large religious contingent in Arizona and in several cities in particular that does not care for tobacco use and may be more amenable to greater restrictions in this area.

Findings from the Public Opinion Poll

Highlights from the public opinion poll that are most useful to decision making are listed below. The full report submitted by the Behavior Research Center is available in Appendix D.

Support for the Policy

More than eight in ten Arizonans feel that smoking should be restricted in public (city, county, or state) parks, but only 18 percent feel that it should be banned completely. A majority of Arizonans (65%) feel that smoking in public parks should be permitted only in designated areas.

Although they did not support a complete smoking ban in public parks, a majority of Arizonans were supportive of smoke-free policies for the following public spaces:

- Playgrounds (69%)
- Concession areas (67%)
- Athletic fields and bleachers (66%)
- Skateboard or bike parks (61%)
- Picnic areas, pavilions and ramadas (60%)
- Major events in parks (57%)
- Hiking trails (51%)

Behaviors and Beliefs Related to Secondhand Smoke

Respondents were asked how much harm breathing smoke from other people's cigarettes or tobacco products causes. More than half (51%) think it causes *a lot of harm* and an additional 30% think it causes *some harm*; only five percent believe that SHS causes no harm.

Women, minorities, and individuals with children in the household feel most strongly that SHS is harmful.

The poll did not specifically ask how harmful individuals perceive SHS to be outdoors. Decreased perception of harm related to outdoor SHS may be one reason why fewer Arizonans support a smoke-free parks policy than a smoking in vehicles with minors policy.

Policy Implementation

Policy Promotion

Ordinances tend to be mostly self-enforcing; thus it is important for the regulating agency to properly **implement the ordinance with an education campaign** to make the public aware of the locations where smoking is prohibited.

A good implementation plan can include several different elements, depending on city/county resources, including signage, publications, websites and dedicated staff.

- **Signage**—“No smoking” signs make it clear to the public where smoking is prohibited and empower people to ask someone to stop smoking.
- **Publications**—Materials such as brochures and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are useful to educate the public about the ordinance and to comply with the new ordinance. Philadelphia printed informational wallet cards with policy information and cessation resources to distribute among recreation center leaders and policy violators.¹⁰⁵
- **Websites**—A useful way to reach a broad audience is to dedicate a section of the jurisdiction’s website to providing information on the ordinance.
- **Dedicated Staff**—Some cities have designated a specific staff person to work on educating businesses and the public about the policy.

It is important to include as many of these elements as possible to ensure that the ordinance is effective at prohibiting smoking in these outdoor areas.

Enforcement

Comprehensive smoke-free ordinances are designed to be self-enforcing. When communities pass these types of policies, they do not intend for police officers to spend their time searching for people smoking in public parks. Rather, the expectation is that through education and signage, residents will become aware of the smoking restrictions and most individuals who smoke will obey the law. If someone does smoke in a restricted area, other patrons or staffers are empowered to ask the individual to stop and inform him/her of the smoking restrictions.

Despite the reliance on self-enforcement, most ordinances have some provisions that allow the regulating agency to enforce the ordinance if needed. Cities and counties have made violations of their smoke-free parks ordinances punishable as a misdemeanor, civil infraction, or both.

In addition, an enforcement agency is usually designated to enforce the smoking prohibitions. Examples of the individuals and departments who are designated as enforcement agencies include police officers, code enforcement officers, fire departments, health and human services departments, environmental health departments and parks departments.

Warning systems, such as a warning instead of a fine for the first violation, are suggested as part of a smoke-free parks policy enforcement plan as the intent of the policy should be primarily educational and to raise awareness than to punish smokers.

Policy Recommendations

Policy Recommendation 1

Put together a coalition of stakeholders.

In order to successfully implement tobacco restrictions, the American Heart Association, American Lung Association, and American Cancer Society must be on board. These three organizations almost always work together on tobacco policies and their absence from a smoke-free parks policy effort would be quite noticeable.

Other stakeholders to get on board or, at a minimum, to contact, include:

- Arizona Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
- Parks Boards and Commissions (at the appropriate level – city, county or state)
- Phoenix Parks Foundation
- Firefighters Associations
- Students Taking a New Direction (STAND) AZ – youth anti-tobacco coalition with 25 chapters across the state
- Arizona Hospital and Healthcare Association
- Arizonans Concerned about Smoking
- Arizona Asthma Coalition
- Arizona COPD Coalition
- March of Dimes
- Children’s Action Alliance
- Campesinos sin Fronteras – supporting youth smoke-free parks efforts in Yuma County
- Other Coalition for a Tobacco Free Arizona members

Other youth serving organizations, insurance agencies, and prevention providers such as Blue Cross Blue Shield and the YMCA are natural allies to this type of effort as well, and have been on board in several other localities nationwide where smoke-free parks policies have been adopted.

One stakeholder also suggested contacting the Arizona Office of Tourism to determine if they would expect any economic impact as a result of a smoke-free parks policy, particularly at the state level.

The policy coalition will help determine the official messaging for the policy, including data and justifications for the policy and counter-arguments to address expected barriers and objections from policy opponents. The coalition will also be able to assess the level of fiscal support available among stakeholder groups to fund the policy effort. Involving the Phoenix Parks Foundation may be particularly important as it is a private organization that raises significant amounts of funding for parks and may be able to mobilize some of its donors to support the effort.

Policy Recommendation 2

Focus on implementing smoke-free parks policies at the local level.

Most existing smoke-free parks policies have been passed at the city level. Fewer than 60 of the 921 smoke-free parks policies listed by the American Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation as of April 2014 (Appendix B) are county-level policies, and only two U.S. states or territories (not including Maine which allows smoking at a distance) have passed such policies.

Additionally, most stakeholders agree that smoke-free parks policies have a better chance of passing at the city level than at the state level as each city has its own ordinance that can be adjusted and the current makeup of the state legislature serves as a significant barrier to policy adoption.

Mesa and Goodyear already have smoke-free parks policies in place; the next quickest perceived wins are in Tempe, Flagstaff and Tucson, which tend to be more responsive to these types of policies.

Additionally, cities and counties with a history of wildfires (e.g., Coconino, Yavapai, etc.) may be more open to smoke-free public parks policies as cigarettes are a significant fire hazard.

Policy Recommendation 3

Consider taking a stepwise approach.

The majority of Arizonans do not currently support a complete ban on smoking in public parks. They do, however, support banning smoking near playgrounds, concession areas, sports fields, and other locations. Thus, it may make sense to take a stepwise approach to smoke-free parks policies in cities or counties that are not comfortable passing a complete ban.

That said, the first policy one attempts to pass should almost always be the most comprehensive and restrictive. The idea is to begin by asking for everything but maintain some flexibility to amend the policy so that it becomes more palatable among stakeholders and decision makers as necessary, without compromising the initial policy intent.

Thus, policy advocates might initially approach stakeholders and policy makers with the idea of banning smoking in public parks completely, and then suggest restricting smoking only to certain areas if there is insufficient support for the full ban.

The main concern with a stepwise approach is that anything less than a complete ban on smoking in public parks may not be acceptable to some of the necessary stakeholder organizations. For example, the American Heart Association generally does not advocate for designated smoking areas because they do not protect everyone and children are still exposed to the behavior. Outdoor smoke still travels

and designated smoking areas negate part of the argument for smoke-free parks, which is to role model appropriate and healthy behaviors for children.

This type of approach would need to be thoroughly discussed in the coalition and agreed upon by all stakeholders.

Policy Recommendation 4

Conduct an educational campaign.

Since uncertain science and a general lack of concern regarding the harmful effects of SHS in outdoor areas were identified as barriers to policy implementation, an educational campaign could help raise awareness and increase support for the policy.

As suggested by stakeholders, not only should the messaging communicate the direct harm to children, it should also communicate the extent to which smoking in public parks increases the risk of wildfires and wastes taxpayer dollars on cleaning up cigarette litter.

Educational campaigns are a necessary component of smoke-free parks policies, both during the advocacy period as well as upon policy adoption and implementation.

Policy Recommendation 5

Consider putting revenues from policy violations toward signage and park enhancements.

Parks at all levels need more money and resources as funding for many parks has been cut in recent years. Policy makers might be more amenable to the policy if it simultaneously helps children, prevents wildfires, saves taxpayer dollars, and provides more funding for parks.

Although the primary intent of the policy should be educational rather than punitive, smoke-free policies often need some sort of penalty attached in order to have the desired impact. Similar to what some other localities have implemented and what some stakeholders suggest, these penalties might include a warning for a first violation, followed by increasing fines ranging from \$25 - \$100 for subsequent violations.

Appendix A

Mesa, Arizona Smoking Policy and Signage Example

Attached as separate document.

Appendix B

List of Smoke-Free Parks Policies Nationwide

Attached as separate document.

Appendix C

Example Smoke-Free Parks Policies

Attached as separate document.

Appendix D

Public Opinion Poll Results (Behavior Research Center, Inc.)

Attached as separate document.

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