

January 20, 2017



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The Nevada Cancer Coalition is **reaching out in support of the Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission for your proactive decision to consider adopting a Smoke Free Outdoors Policy** establishing all outdoor areas of Washoe County parks as clean air zones. Such a policy will help protect visitors to Washoe County parks – particularly children and youth – from the dangerous effects of secondhand smoke and from the chemicals and carcinogens contained in cigarettes. We support and encourage you to adopt a comprehensive Smoke/Tobacco/Vape-free policy. Enacting such a policy will be supported by the vast majority of Nevadans. Nearly 85% of Nevada residents are non-smokers who prefer they and their children avoid exposure to secondhand smoke and to the carcinogens contained in cigarettes.

We've enclosed an information sheet that helps explain the detrimental effects of secondhand smoke and outlines easy steps for Washoe County parks to become Smoke Free Outdoors locations. Simple signs with messages like "Smoke/Tobacco/Vape Free Zone – Young Lungs at Play" are an easy and inexpensive way to announce the parks' Smoke Free policy. We encourage consistency among park signage on this topic throughout Washoe County, Reno and Sparks parks.

The Nevada Cancer Coalition and our partners at the Washoe County Health District are here to support you in implementing a Smoke Free Outdoors policy. We can provide technical assistance on developing and implementing a smoke/tobacco/vape free policy, creating signs that inform without offending, and more.

Questions? Contact me at 775.737.4580 or via email at christine@nevadacancercoalition.org.

We look forward to helping you and the Washoe County Open Space and Regional Parks Commission take our parks Smoke/Tobacco/Vape Free.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Christine".

Christine Thompson
Community Program Manager



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Smoke Free Outdoors You Can Make It Happen.

Why is going Smoke Free important?

- **No amount of secondhand smoke is safe**

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, there is **NO safe level of exposure** to secondhand smoke.

- **Encouraging children to make healthy choices**

The CDC reports that when children see adults using tobacco products, including smoking and vaping, the behavior is normalized making children more likely to use tobacco.

- **Cost of maintenance decreases**

Smoke, ash, matches, and cigarette butts account for 31.5% of litter in our parks and outdoor recreation areas, according to Keep America Beautiful.org.

- **Lower risk of fire**

Discarded cigarette butts and vaping devices pose a **real fire risk** in our dry desert climate.

Easy Steps to become Smoke Free

1. **Form** a smoke free task force.
2. **Develop** a smoke free policy.
3. **Announce** the policy change and the effective date.
4. **Educate** and **provide** cessation resources.
5. **Implement** the smoke free policy.
6. **Post** smoke free signs such as "young lungs at play" to notify patrons.
7. **Remove** cigarette receptacles (or replace with planters if desired).
8. **Maintain** the policy with continuing education and resource efforts.

According to the CDC, nearly 85% of Nevadans do NOT smoke.

Visit NevadaCancerCoalition.org for more information



Exposure in Nevada

With the passage of the **Nevada Clean Indoor Air Act in 2006**, indoor smoking bans protect children from secondhand smoke in many public places throughout Nevada. However there are still public settings intended for use by children such as **outdoor parks, recreational areas and restaurant patios** that **permit smoking**. It is time to bring clean air outdoors. **Nearly 85% of Nevadans are non-smokers**. There is strong support for making children- and youth-oriented parks and recreation areas 100% smoke free. Join the movement.

What is Secondhand Smoke?

Secondhand smoke is both the **direct smoke** from burning tobacco products and the **smoke breathed out** by smokers.

- This combination of smoke contains **70 known carcinogens**.
- According to the CDC, an estimated **41,000 non-smoking Americans die each year** from diseases caused by **secondhand smoke**.

Physical Effects of Exposure

No matter how brief, **any exposure** to secondhand smoke causes **adverse health effects** to the cardiovascular system:

- **5 minutes**: — aorta stiffens, equivalent to smoking 1 cigarette
- **20-30 minutes** — excess blood clotting and buildup of fat deposits in blood vessels, increasing the risk of heart attack and stroke
- **2 hours** — increased risk of arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat) which can result in fatal cardiac event or heart attack

Exposure in Children

Exposure to secondhand smoke is **most harmful to infants and young children** as they are still developing. Exposure to secondhand smoke in children is known to **increase the risk** of the following health effects:

- **SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome)**
- **Ear infections**
- **Acute respiratory symptoms and infections**
- **Asthma**

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