



2019 Play Tobacco Free Park Policy Status Report

We have been pleased with the community's general support of and compliance with the Play Tobacco Free policy.

The Play Tobacco Free policy was implemented in 2012. Since then staff have periodically visited parks to determine if new Play Tobacco Free signs were needed at any location. Last year the following parks were surveilled: Antelope Park, Holmes Lake Park, Oak Lake Park, Peter Pan Park, and Pioneers Park. As a follow up to last year's Tobacco-Free Park Policy efforts, Mahoney Park, Oak Lake Park, Peter Pan Park, Pioneers Park and Woods Park were inspected during the month of July 2019.

In an effort to improve the public's awareness and compliance to the Play Tobacco Free policy, this summary provides our staff's observations at each park, including:

- the location of Play Tobacco Free signage,
- if cigarette butt litter was observed on or near the playground, picnic shelters or other prohibited areas
- whether smoking or vaping was directly observed

Follow-up questions about this report can be directed to the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department Health Promotion and Outreach Tobacco Prevention Team: Program Coordinator Brian Baker, 441-8046 and Health Educators Christina Hitz, 441-6224, Rebekah Willoughby, 441-4605 and Cassandra LeBlanc, 441-4685.

2019 Play Tobacco Free Park Surveillance Report

Mahoney Park:

Play Tobacco Free Signs were observed at the ball field, picnic shelter, and restrooms. There were very few littered cigarette butts near the picnic area, playground and parking lot.

Oak Lake Park: There are Play Tobacco Free signs on the Parks Regulation sign and on one of the trash receptacles near the playground. There are also signs located in the picnic pavilions and the equipment sheds. There were fresh cigarette butts on the playground surface near the outer edges. A significant amount of cigarette butts were observed on the walking areas and in the parking lot.

Peter Pan Park: There were multiple Play Tobacco Free signs posted on the tennis and skateboard enclosures, in addition to, the playground trash receptacle and picnic shelter. There were a few cigarette butts on the playground and in the skateboard enclosure near the ramps. The parking lot had significant cigarette butt litter.

Pioneers Park: There were a few cigarette butts in and around the picnic shelter area and the grill area adjacent to the picnic shelter. There are Play Tobacco Free Signs near the Ball Field and inside of the picnic shelter.

Woods Park: There was a Play Tobacco Free sign on the trash receptacle near the playground and one mounted on the picnic shelter. There were significant amounts of cigarette litter near the tennis center and the parking lot of the tennis center, as well as the parking lots near the ball fields.

Summary: Based on these findings, we conclude that the Play Tobacco Free Policy has been received well by park users and is improving the quality of park visits. While varying smoking evidence was observed at all parks inspected, surveillance determined that compliance with the policy has significantly increased. This occurred in conjunction with the updated 2019 signage, which added the international no smoking, vaping, and chewing symbols. We surmise that increased compliance is likely through implementation of some additional public awareness campaigns. To assess the effectiveness of additional public awareness measures, staff will survey selected parks annually.

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