



Town of Camden, Maine

Policy to Promote a Smoke-free Environment in Municipal Playgrounds, Beaches, Parks, Facilities, Trails and Open Spaces

Smoking prohibited. No person may smoke tobacco or any other substance in, on, or within 20 feet of a Town building, park, beach, playground, picnic area, trail, or athletic facility. This prohibition includes the Camden Public Library, Amphitheatre, Harbor Park, and adjacent municipal parking lots.

Smoking defined. Smoking means inhaling, exhaling, burning, carrying or having in one's possession any lit cigarette, cigar, pipe, plant or other combustible substance in any manner or any form.

Litter. Discarding any tobacco product on any public street, sidewalk, park, parking lot or other public area is considered littering and is subject to the penalties contained in state law Title 17 M.R.S.A. §2264-A

Violations. Any person who violates or refuses to comply with this policy shall be subject to removal from the public facility at the demand of a Town official or law enforcement officer having authority over the public area. Law enforcement officers may also issue citations for criminal and civil violations, as applicable under Maine law.

Purpose: Camden is committed to promoting and healthy and safe environment. We are fortunate to have many parks, recreational areas and open spaces. We want people of all ages to come to and enjoy these areas. The State of Maine prohibits smoking in outdoor eating establishments, State parks and picnic areas. This policy is intended to seek voluntary compliance, be educational, and help create a healthier environment. As noted by Healthy Maine Partnerships: Air without secondhand tobacco smoke is safer to breathe. Tobacco smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, and over 40 of them cause cancer. It is especially harmful to children, in whom it can cause illnesses like ear infections, bronchitis, and asthma. The US Surgeon General has stated that there is no safe level of secondhand smoke.

The policy also addresses cigarette-related litter. Cigarette filters can take up to ten years to break down; when improperly disposed of they pose a continuing nuisance and health hazard. According to Healthy Maine Partnerships, cigarette butts are the most common kind of litter in the United States. The filters contain nicotine, arsenic, mercury, and lead which are lethal to wildlife and can seep into water. If eaten by a small child, cigarette butts can cause nicotine poisoning, with symptoms of nausea, vomiting, and breathing problems. Improperly disposed of cigarettes are a leading cause of fire in the United States, costing lives and millions of dollars in damage.

Adopted by the Camden Select Board July 16, 2013