



POSITION STATEMENT

Position Title:	Smoke-Free Outdoor Spaces
Approved by:	Cynthia St. John, Chief Executive Officer Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health Board of Health for Oxford Elgin St. Thomas Health Unit
Date Approved:	April 10, 2019
Date Effective:	April 10, 2019
Date Revised:	
Contact:	Ashlyn Brown, Health Promoter Gemma Urbani, Smoke-Free Ontario Coordinator

Position of Southwestern Public Health

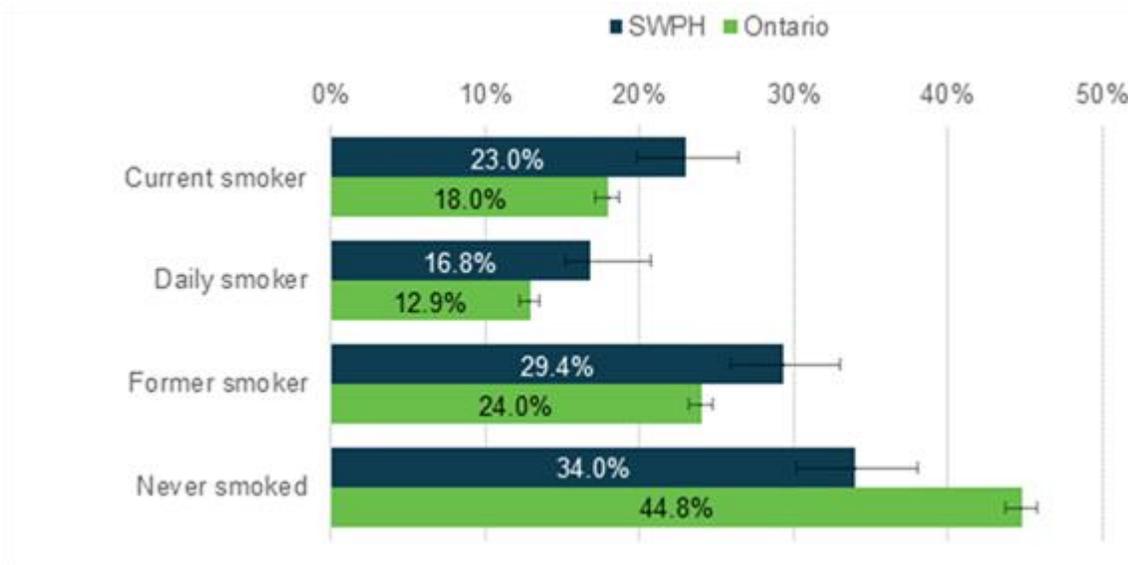
1. Public Health supports outdoor restrictions for smoking and vaping in locations where children, youth, and adults play, work, and enjoy leisure activities, including parks, playgrounds, trails, beaches, and outdoor recreation settings.
2. No amount of second-hand smoke exposure is safe. Breathing in any amount of smoke can negatively impact health.
3. Smoke-free and vape-free outdoor spaces help create healthy, supportive environments for children, youth and adults alike. Elimination of second-hand smoke, potentially harmful aerosols, and littered cigarette butts in parks, playgrounds, beaches and outdoor recreational settings creates a healthy environment for all.
4. Smoke-free and vape-free outdoor space policies contribute to the de-normalization of tobacco, nicotine, and other substance use in public places and thus encourages young people to live smoke-free and vape-free lives.
5. Smoke-free and vape-free spaces provide a supportive environment for people who wish to quit smoking, vaping, and using other tobacco products.

Rationale:

Smoking Prevalence

From 2015-2016, there were higher proportions of adults who were current smokers (daily and occasional), daily smokers and former smokers in the Southwestern Public Health (SWPH) region compared to Ontario (Figure 1). The SWPH region consists of Oxford County, Elgin County, and the City of St. Thomas. About one-third (34.0%) of adults living in the SWPH region completely abstained from smoking cigarettes in their lifetime compared to 44.8% of adults in Ontario.¹

Figure 1. Age-standardized smoking status, adults 20 years and older, Southwestern Public Health and Ontario, 2015-2016¹



Health Effects

Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in Ontario with 13,000 Ontarians dying annually of smoking related illness.² Both smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke have been linked to several cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases and other chronic conditions.³ In fact, over 1000 non-smoking Canadians die every year from heart and lung diseases caused by second-hand smoke exposure.⁴

Almost all organ systems are negatively affected by smoking. Respiratory, cardiac, vascular, neurological, metabolic, obstetric and pediatric issues arise from smoking tobacco and create a significant burden on public health and health care resources. Smoking is a risk factor for lung cancer, heart disease, stroke, chronic respiratory disease, among many other conditions.⁵

According to the Smoke-Free Ontario Strategy Modernization Report, smoking accounts for 41% (\$3.65 billion) of healthcare costs incurred from unhealthy behaviours in Ontario. The social and economic costs of tobacco use (lost productivity, lost income, etc.) equates to a staggering \$5.3 billion.**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

In addition to direct tobacco use, there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke.⁶ Second-hand smoke contains over 4,000 chemicals, at least 70 of which are known to be carcinogenic or otherwise toxic.⁶ A study conducted by Stanford University found that during periods of active smoking, peak and average outdoor tobacco smoke levels near smokers could rival indoor tobacco smoke concentrations.⁷ The World Health Organization also cites research demonstrating that outdoor second-hand smoke can be significant and sometimes reach levels observed indoors. Concentration levels depend on the number of cigarettes smoked, location of adjacent walls, and meteorological conditions (wind speed and direction).⁸

As well, e-cigarette aerosol is not harmless and can contain harmful and potentially harmful constituents including nicotine, ultrafine particles; flavourings such as diacetyl, a chemical linked to serious lung disease; volatile organic compounds such as benzene, which is found in car exhaust; and heavy metals, such as nickel, tin, and lead.⁹

There are a number of reasons to restrict or prohibit smoking and vaping outdoors, including protecting children from social exposure to smoking, vaping and other industry products, assisting smokers who are trying to quit, supporting ex-smokers from starting to smoke again, reducing butt litter and risk of fire, and in some circumstances, offering protection from exposure to second-hand smoke, third-hand smoke, and potentially harmful e-cigarette aerosol.**Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Denormalization and Role Modeling

In 2015, young adults were most likely to smoke compared to other age groups.**Error! Bookmark not defined.** School and community environments play an important role in influencing young people's smoking behaviour. Strong and well-enforced tobacco policies in these environments have demonstrated positive effects on controlling the prevalence of smoking behaviours.¹⁰

Smoking restrictions, both indoors and outdoors, help decrease the social acceptability of smoking and challenge the perception among youth that "everybody smokes". If children and youth are not exposed to smoking behaviour, they may be less likely to think of it as normal and be able to resist peer pressure and other incentives to start smoking.⁹

Impact on Quitting Smoking

Smoke-free public spaces provide a supportive environment for people who wish to stop smoking. Research has demonstrated that when smoking bans have been implemented in workplaces and communities, many smokers have chosen to cut back or quit smoking entirely.¹¹ The Ontario Tobacco Research Unit conducted a survey in 2015 regarding outdoor Smoke Free Ontario Act regulations and found that almost half of smokers (42%) believed that the new smoking regulations would help them quit or cut down the number of cigarettes smoked.¹²

The Tobacco End Game for Canada Background Paper lists banning smoking in additional settings as one of five areas including (post-secondary school campuses, public spaces/workplaces on First Nation reserves, social and other multi-unit housing, and some outdoor public places) that should be scaled up as part of Canada's Tobacco End Game and highlights that by not doing so, substantial parts of the population continue to be subjected to physical and social exposure to smoking.¹³

Community Support and Evaluation

In 2016 a poll was conducted both at Port Stanley Beach and online, to determine if respondents were in support of smoke-free beaches. Overall, there were a total of 1612 poll responses, 72% of which were in favour of smoke-free beaches. When the results

were analyzed by poll source, the poll conducted at the beach showed 88% in favour of smoke-free beaches versus the online survey.¹⁴ In a 2009 survey conducted by the City of St. Thomas, 75% of respondents were in support of smoking restrictions in parks.¹⁵

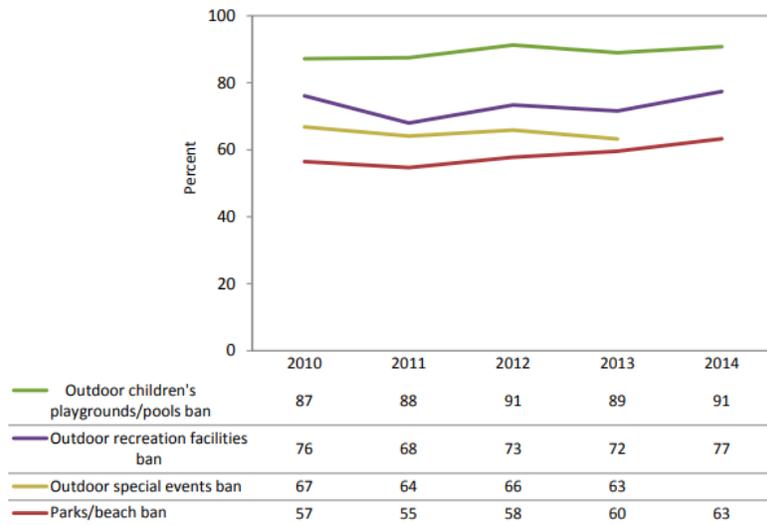
The evaluation City of Woodstock Outdoor Smoke-free Spaces Bylaw found that most smokers (73%) and non-smokers (92%) supported the bylaw one year after implementation and one third (33%) of smokers felt the bylaw helped them to reduce the number of cigarettes they smoke. The bylaw has had no impact on the way people use city facilities or businesses.¹⁶

This figure (right) from the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit's 2017 Smoke-Free Strategy Monitoring Report, shows rates of agreement that smoking should be banned in many outdoor spaces.¹⁷

Bylaws in Other Jurisdictions

The Propel Centre for Population Health Impact at the University of Waterloo conducted research regarding the impact of smoke-free bylaw implementation on municipal resources. No

area municipality surveyed reported that they hired additional enforcement staff as a result of their community's smoke-free by-law. Most municipalities (95%) posted signage to support awareness of their by-law; signs costs ranged from \$40-\$150/sign with most municipalities reporting signs were made in-house. Most communities reported actively enforcing the by-law; six communities reported they had issued tickets to people not in compliance with outdoor smoking restrictions. Their research concluded that the implementation, promotion, and enforcement of outdoor smoke-free by-laws have required municipal staff time and, in most cases, have promotional costs, but these have come from existing budgets and using existing staff. Outdoor smoke-free by-laws have not created significant burdens on municipal enforcement staff or on municipal budgets.¹⁸



Note: Public opinions related to smoking bans at outdoor special events were not collected in 2014.
Source: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Monitor (Full Year) 2010–2014.

Many municipalities in Ontario have introduced bylaws that go beyond the Smoke-Free Ontario Act to protect people from the dangers and potential dangers of smoking, vaping, and second-hand smoke. Examples of municipalities with smoke-free bylaws are below:

Municipality	Year Bylaw Passed/ Amended	Smoking Prohibited	Products
Amherstburg ¹⁹	2016	Beaches; Outdoor Events; Playgrounds, which may include Splash Pads and Wading Pools; Sports and Recreational Fields and Facilities; Trails; Waterpipes (outdoors).	Cigarettes, Cigars, Pipes, Electronic Smoking Devices, Other Tobacco Products, Other Weeds and Substances, Waterpipes
Township of King ²⁰	2016	Beaches; E-cigarettes (indoors); E-cigarettes (outdoors); Municipal Property; Parks; Playgrounds, which may include Splash Pads and Wading Pools; Sports and Recreational Fields and Facilities; Trails; Waterpipes (indoors); Waterpipes (outdoors).	Cigarettes, Cigars, Pipes, Electronic Smoking Devices, Other Tobacco Products, Other Weeds and Substances, Waterpipes
Cobourg ²¹	2015	Beaches; Doorways, air intakes, operable windows; Municipal Property; Parks; Playgrounds, which may include Splash Pads and Wading Pools; Sports and Recreational Fields and Facilities; Transit Shelters/Stops.	Cigarettes, Cigars, Pipes, Other Tobacco Products
Chatham-Kent ²²	2014	Beaches; Doorways, air intakes, operable windows; Municipal Property Parks; Playgrounds, which may include Splash Pads and	Cigarettes, Cigars, Pipes, Other Weeds and Substances, Waterpipes

		Wading Pools; Sports and Recreational Fields and Facilities Trails; Transit Shelters/Stops; Waterpipes (outdoors).	
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Implications for Southwestern Public Health:

Southwestern Public Health will:

1. Include cautionary messages to the public regarding the known and potential risks associated with second-hand smoke and vaping aerosols exposure in outdoor spaces.
2. Continue to evaluate new research as it becomes available and review the organization’s position on smoke-free outdoor spaces, as necessary.
3. Advocate for smoke-free outdoor public spaces and municipal property inclusion in local by-laws and policies, not included in the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.
4. Promote bylaw/policy changes, including possible signage
5. Support bylaw enforcement officers with enforcement of the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, as it relates smoke-free outdoor spaces.

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Definitions:

Electronic Cigarette (e-cigarette): E-cigarettes are battery powered and contain an atomizer that heats the liquid and turns it into a vapour that resembles smoke. E-cigarettes are sometimes called e-cigs, vapes, vape pens, and e-hookahs. E-cigarettes sometimes look like regular cigarettes, cigars, pipes, pens, USB flash drives or other everyday items.

Second-Hand Smoke: tobacco smoke that is exhaled by smokers or is given off by burning tobacco.

Third-Hand Smoke: Smoke that persists for months and even years that settles on surfaces (carpets, curtains, furnishings) and in dust form which can produce off-gassing.