

# City of Bemidji Parks and Recreation Department

## Tobacco and Vaping Free Policy

### Policy Statement

The City of Bemidji Parks and Recreation Department is committed to the quality of life of all residents. The Parks and Recreation Department provides facilities, activities, and parklands to enrich the lives of citizens and tourists. Therefore, it is understood:

1. Tobacco product use in the proximity of children, youth and adults engaging in or watching recreational activities is unhealthy and detrimental to the health of others.
2. Tobacco products once consumed in public spaces are often discarded on the ground, those posing a risk of ingestion to toddlers and causing a litter problem.
3. As parents, leaders, and officials we are thought of as role models, and the use of tobacco products around youth has a negative effect on the on their lifestyle choices.
4. Electronic delivery devices, more commonly referred to as electronic cigarettes or e-cigarettes typically contain nicotine or other substances intended for human consumption through inhalation of vapor from the device, which nicotine and other substances are highly addictive, and their use (1) closely resembles and purposefully mimics the act of smoking, (2) produces an aerosol or vapor of undetermined and potentially harmful substances, (3) is increasing among both adults and youth, (4) is especially concerning among youth because of the negative impacts of nicotine and such other substances on the developing adolescent brain, (5) threatens to re-normalize smoking, potentially jeopardizing tobacco control efforts of the past and present, and (6) creates confusion and leads to difficulties enforcing smoking prohibitions.

### Tobacco and Vaping Free Facilities

The City of Bemidji does not allow the use of tobacco products or the use of Electronic Delivery Devices (vaping) on City-owned park land, trails, recreational facilities or open space.

It is not a violation of this policy to use tobacco in or on recreational areas as part of a traditional spiritual or cultural ceremony. Approval from City administration must be requested and received prior to the ceremony.

### Compliance Procedures

The emphasis on enforcing the Tobacco and Vaping Free Park Policy is through voluntary compliance:

1. Appropriate City-owned parkland, park facilities, or open space properties will be signed.
2. Bemidji Park and Recreation staff will meet with activity organizations and/or leaders to discuss the policy and distribute flyers with the "Tobacco and Vaping Free" regulations.
3. Bemidji Park and Recreation staff will make periodic observations of activity site to monitor compliance.
4. Any person found violating this policy may be subject to immediate ejection from the recreational facility.