



## **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.

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 and whether smoking or vaping was directly observed.

In an effort to improve the public's awareness and compliance to the Play Tobacco Free policy, suggestions to improve compliance have been included in this report.

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.



Photo 1: Mahoney Park ball field entrance banner



Photo 2: Mahoney Park Picnic Shelter sign



Photo 3: Mahoney Park bathroom



Photo 4: Mahoney Parking lot cigarette litter



Photo 5: Mahoney Park Playground Picnic shelter cigarette butt litter



Photo 6: Mahoney Park cigarette butt near trash receptacle; no Play Tobacco Free signage



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**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.



Photo 7: Oak Lake Park Playground Entrance



Photo 8 & 9: Play Tobacco Free Signs on Pavillion at Oak Lake Park



Photo 10 & 11: Play Tobacco Free Signs on Trash Receptacle and Equipment Shed at Oak Lake Park



Photo 12: Cigarette Butt Litter on Playground Near Park Bench at Oak Lake Park



Photo 13: Cigarette Butt Litter at the Edge of the Playground at Oak Lake Park



## 2019 Play Tobacco Free Park Surveillance Report

**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.



Photo 14,15,16: Peter Pan Park Signage: Picnic Pavilion, Trash Receptacle, and Skateboard Enclosure.

Photo 17: Cigarette Butt Litter in Peter Pan walking areas



Photo 18: Cigarette Butt Litter in Peter Pan Parking Lot



Photo 19 & 20: Cigarette Butt Litter in Skateboard Enclosure

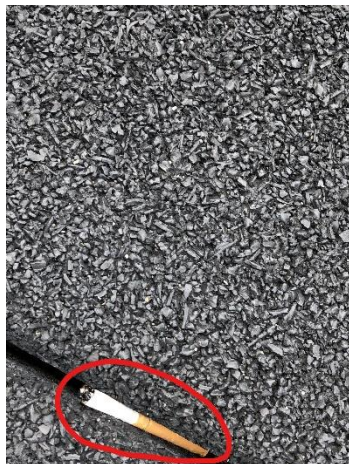


Photo 21 & 22: Fresh Cigarette Butt Litter on Playground Surface



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**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.



*[Photo 23 & 24:](#) Cigarette Butt Litter Near Grill Adjacent to Picnic Shelter at Pioneers Park*

*[Photo 25:](#) Signage Inside Picnic Shelter at Pioneers Park*



*[Photo 26,27,28,29:](#) Cigarette Butt Litter Near Grill Adjacent to Picnic Shelter at Pioneers Park*



*[Photo 30,31,32,33:](#) Cigarette Butt Litter found in the parking lot at Pioneers Park*



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**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.



Photo 34,35,36: Woods Park Play Free Tobacco Signage: Tennis Center and Swimming area



Photo 37: Woods Park Sign on a Utility Shed



Photo 38: Woods Park Play Free Tobacco Signage on Trash Receptacle



Photo 39 & 40: Woods Park Cigarette Butt litter near the Tennis Center area and parking lot

## 2019 Play Tobacco Free Park Surveillance Report

**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 of the public awareness options outlined below. To assess the effectiveness of additional public awareness measures, staff will survey selected parks annually.

### **Suggestions to Improve Compliance:**

Tobacco Prevention funding available to assist compliance efforts

Clarify Play Tobacco Free signage language to expound that parking lots are included in the policy

Increase citizen awareness about tobacco-free park policy, including parking areas

- Additional/updated public service announcements
- Increase Play Tobacco Free signage where needed
- Social media messaging/ads
- Midday forum each April explaining policy

Maintain record of complaints and follow-up actions

Continue partnership with Keep Lincoln Lancaster County Beautiful litter clean-ups

- Boys and Girls Club/Cooper Park
- Salvation Army/Pentzer park

Park litter clean-up efforts

- Adoption of parks by community/neighborhood groups