

## Dakota County, Minnesota

### Policy Direction for a Tobacco Use Policy In Dakota County Parks

**WHEREAS**, the Dakota County Board of Commissioners acts as the Community Health Board, pursuant to County Board resolutions dated October 31, 1978 and January 6, 1987 (Resolution No. 87-4) and has responsibility to prevent disease and disability and to promote and protect the public health and safety of county citizens; and

**WHEREAS**, Dakota County was approached by concerned citizens regarding the use of tobacco on park properties as creating an unhealthy environment for park visitors; and

**WHEREAS**, tobacco use in the proximity of children and adults engaging in or watching outdoor recreational activities at County-owned or operated park facilities is detrimental to their health; and

**WHEREAS**, parents, adult leaders, and others involved in recreation serve as role models for youth and can have a positive effect on the lifestyle choices they make; and

**WHEREAS**, cigarettes, cigars and other forms of tobacco, once consumed in public spaces, are often discarded on the ground, resulting in litter, increased upkeep costs, diminished aesthetics, increased fire risk, and risk of ingestion by toddlers; and

**WHEREAS**, Dakota County has a unique opportunity to create and sustain an environment that supports a non-tobacco norm through a tobacco use policy which serves to protect the health, safety and welfare of County residents; and

**WHEREAS**, On April 11, 2007 the Dakota County Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PARAC) recommended adoption of a comprehensive County Parks policy that would prohibit the use of all tobacco products at or on any County-owned or operated park property and recreational facilities, exempting parking lots, roadways, individually rented campsites in County-owned or operated campgrounds, and use of tobacco as part of a traditional Native American spiritual or cultural ceremony, and further communicates the recommendation for adoption of this comprehensive policy by the Dakota County Board of Commissioners.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Dakota County Board of Commissioners hereby prohibits the use of all tobacco products in County park property and recreational facilities effective June 22, 2007, except in parking lots, on roadways, individually rented campsites in County-owned or operated campgrounds, and use of tobacco as part of a traditional Native American spiritual or cultural ceremony; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that tobacco use parks policy compliance will be encouraged through signage, awareness and education; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that staff is hereby directed to consider including the tobacco use parks policy in the next amendment to the Dakota County Parks Ordinance 107; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that staff is hereby directed to research a tobacco use policy for all Dakota County grounds and buildings, and return in 90 days with recommendations.

*May 22, 2007*