



Smoke-Free Outdoor Bylaws: Join the Growing Trend

Issue Overview

Tobacco is a major health issue that needs the attention of municipal leaders. In Canada, tobacco use is still the leading cause of preventable death. Every year, 37,000 Canadians die of tobacco-related illnesses including cancer. In addition to smokers, others are put at risk through exposure to second-hand smoke (SHS) which contains about 50 carcinogens and is so toxic that the US Surgeon General and the World Health Organization have determined that there is no safe level of exposure.

Municipalities in Canada have long shown leadership in adopting smoke-free bylaws for indoor workplaces and public places. Municipalities have paved the way for province-wide laws. And today, as in the past, many municipal bylaws go beyond the minimum standard in provincial smoke-free laws.

Tremendous progress has been made in Canada, and currently virtually all indoor workplaces and public places in Canada are smoke-free. Now, municipal councils are banning smoking in specified outdoor areas. There are many benefits of such municipal bylaws.

Why implement a smoke-free outdoor bylaw?

1. Protection from second-hand smoke

Second-hand smoke is extremely toxic. It contains over 4000 chemicals including at least 50 known cancer-causing substances. In an outdoor setting, SHS can be a hazard, though this can be affected by circumstances. According to researcher Niel Klepeis from Stanford University: "when measured close to a person who is actively smoking, air pollution can reach very high levels that are similar to levels observed for indoor smoking."¹

2. Increases the motivation for smokers to quit or cut back

Smokers respond to smoking restrictions by cutting back or quitting. Research conducted by Statistics Canada has demonstrated that when smoking bans have been implemented in homes and workplaces, many smokers have chosen to cutback or quit.

3. Decreases negative role modeling for children

If children and youth are not exposed to adult smoking behaviour, they may be less likely to think of it as normal. Since most smokers start before the age of 18, this is important for public health.

4. Protects the environment and reduces litter

Prohibiting smoking in outdoor locations would reduce the number of discarded butts. A 2006 litter study in the City of Toronto found that tobacco related litter (butts and packaging) made up 16.4% of pieces of small litter. Furthermore, the 2007 Great Canadian Shore Cleanup reported that in Alberta, tobacco related litter outnumbered other types by a ratio of 3:1. Reduced litter will reduce municipal clean up costs.

¹ www.tobaccosmoke.org/outdoor-tobacco-smoke-study/are-levels-really-the-same-as-for-indoor-smoking , Accessed May 17, 2010. Original study "Real-Time Measurement of Outdoor Tobacco Smoke Particles" Published in the *Journal of the Air and Waste Management Association*

Smoking related litter is also a health hazard. In the US about 8000 potential toxic exposures are reported every year due to the ingestion of tobacco products by small children. In addition, fish, birds and other animals often swallow discarded butts which results in illness and death.

5. Reduced fire risk

Smoking, particularly in wooded areas, increases the risk of fire. An outdoor smoking bylaw may reduce this risk by controlling the places where smoking is allowed.

Municipalities are urged to join the growing trend to adopt municipal bylaws requiring certain outdoor places to be smoke-free. Municipalities have the opportunity to improve public health within the community, at virtually no cost, and even with some cost savings. Many municipalities have already adopted successful municipal bylaws in this area. See examples below.

The following table indicates which municipalities have required specified outdoor places to be smoke-free. As this area is quickly evolving, additional municipalities could inevitably be added to the listing.

Restriction	Municipality	
Entrances/exits to buildings²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anmore (BC) (7.5m) ▪ Belcarra (BC) (7.5m) ▪ Pemberton (BC) (6m) ▪ Pitt Meadows (BC) ▪ Port Moody (BC) (7.5m) ▪ Powell River (BC) (6m) ▪ Richmond (BC) (6m) ▪ Richmond County (NS) (5m) ▪ Stettler (AB) (6m) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Surrey (BC) (7.5m) ▪ North Vancouver (District of) (BC) (6m) ▪ Vancouver (BC) (6m) ▪ Victoria County (NS) (5m) ▪ West Vancouver (BC) (6m) ▪ Whistler (BC) (6m) ▪ White Rock (BC) (7.5m) ▪ Whitehorse (YT) (3m) ▪ Wood Buffalo Region (AB) (10m)
Patios of restaurants/bars³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anmore (BC) ▪ Brighton (ON) ▪ Burpee & Mills (ON) ▪ Capital Regional District/Victoria (BC) ▪ Kingston (ON) ▪ North Vancouver (District of) (BC) ▪ North Vancouver (City of) BC ▪ Pitt Meadows (BC) ▪ Port Moody (BC) ▪ Powell River (BC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Richmond (BC) ▪ Saskatoon (SK) ▪ Squamish (BC) ▪ Surrey (BC) ▪ Tehkummah (ON) ▪ Thunder Bay (ON) ▪ Vancouver (BC) ▪ West Vancouver (BC) ▪ Whistler (BC) ▪ White Rock (BC)
Perimeter around restaurant/bar patios⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ North Vancouver (BC) (6m) ▪ Port Moody (BC) (7.5m) ▪ Powell River (BC) (6m) ▪ Richmond (BC) (6m) ▪ Squamish (BC) (3m) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Surrey (BC) (7.5m) ▪ Vancouver (BC) (6m) ▪ West Vancouver (BC) (6m) ▪ White Rock (BC) (7.5m)

² Provincial laws banning smoking at entrances/exits to all workplaces and public places are Alberta (5m), Yukon (5m), N.S. (4m), B.C. (3m). Some municipal bylaws (not those listed above) ban smoking at entrances/exits of municipal buildings, but not all workplaces and public places.

³ Alberta, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador and the Yukon prohibit smoking on patios of restaurants/bars. Municipal bylaws in Alberta and Nova Scotia with 100% smoke-free patios are not listed above because province-wide laws are now also in place.

⁴ No person may smoke within a certain distance of a patio, which for Vancouver is 6m.

Municipal parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Barrie (ON) ▪ Belleville (ON) ▪ Kentville (NS) ▪ L’Ancienne-Lorette (QC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridgewater (NS) ▪ Cornwall (ON) ▪ Port Moody (BC) ▪ Squamish (BC) ▪ Vancouver (BC) ▪ White Rock (BC)
Children’s playgrounds⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abbotsford (BC) ▪ Adjala-Tosorontio (ON) ▪ Arnprior (ON) ▪ Barrie (ON) ▪ Belcarra (BC) ▪ Bridgewater (NS) ▪ Clearview (ON) ▪ Collingwood (ON) ▪ Cornwall (ON) ▪ Elliot Lake (ON) ▪ Kentville (NS) ▪ L’Ancienne-Lorette (QC) ▪ Midland (ON) ▪ New Tecumseh (ON) ▪ North Vancouver (BC) ▪ Orillia (ON) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pemberton (BC) ▪ Port Moody (BC) ▪ Powell River (BC) ▪ Quinte West (ON) ▪ Richmond (BC) ▪ Sault Ste. Marie (ON) ▪ South Bruce (ON) ▪ Squamish (BC) ▪ St. John’s (NL) ▪ Toronto (ON) ▪ Uxbridge (ON) ▪ Vancouver (BC) ▪ West Vancouver (BC) ▪ Whistler (BC) ▪ White Rock (BC) ▪ Woodstock (ON)
Sports/playing fields⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abbotsford (BC) ▪ Adjala-Tosorontio (ON) ▪ Clearview (ON) ▪ Elliot Lake (ON) ▪ L’Ancienne-Lorette (QC) ▪ Pemberton (BC) ▪ Port Moody (BC) ▪ Powell River (BC) ▪ Richmond (BC) ▪ Whistler (BC) ▪ White Rock (BC) ▪ South Bruce (ON) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Barrie (ON) ▪ Belcarra (BC) ▪ Bridgewater (NS) ▪ Georgina (ON)⁷ ▪ Kentville (NS) ▪ Midland (ON) ▪ North Vancouver (BC) ▪ Sault Ste. Marie (ON) ▪ Squamish (BC) ▪ Orillia (ON) ▪ Quinte West (ON) ▪ West Vancouver (BC) ▪ Woodstock (ON)
Seating areas; stadiums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Abbotsford (BC) ▪ Barrie (ON) ▪ Belcarra (BC) ▪ Bridgewater (NS) ▪ Cornwall (ON) ▪ Mission (BC) ▪ New Tecumseh (ON) ▪ Orillia (ON) ▪ Ottawa (ON) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peterborough (ON) ▪ Port Moody (BC) ▪ Red Deer (AB) ▪ Richmond (BC) ▪ Sylvan Lake (AB) ▪ Whistler (BC) ▪ White Rock (BC) ▪ Woodstock (ON)
Events on municipal property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridgewater (NS) ▪ Clearview (ON) ▪ North Vancouver (BC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ St. Albert (AB)
Outdoor venue for assembly of persons (e.g. entertainment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Belcarra (BC)⁸ ▪ Devon (AB) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pemberton (BC) ▪ Whistler (BC)

⁵ Owen Sound (ON) and St. John’s (N&L) are examples of banning smoking on playgrounds by policy, not bylaw.

⁶ In addition, many municipalities have adopted policies (as opposed to bylaws) so that municipal sports fields (e.g. soccer fields) are smoke-free. Examples include Owen Sound (ON) and Fernie (BC). In Newfoundland and Labrador, 46 communities (including St. John’s) representing 73% of the population have policies for smoke-free athletic and recreational properties (source: Alliance for the Control of Tobacco, 2009).

⁷ Georgina Civic Centre soccer fields

⁸ Public gathering places where people sit or stand together in close proximity.

Bus stops/transit stops⁹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ North Vancouver, City (BC) ▪ Pemberton (BC) ▪ Powell River (BC) ▪ Port Moody (BC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Richmond (BC) ▪ West Vancouver (BC) ▪ Woodstock (ON)
Perimeter of bus shelters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ North Vancouver, City (BC)(7.5m) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Richmond (BC) (3m)
Transit property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ottawa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪
Near school property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridgewater (NS)¹⁰ ▪ Pemberton (BC) ▪ Powell River (BC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Yarmouth (NS)¹¹ ▪ Whistler (BC) (25m)
Beaches¹²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Orillia (ON) ▪ Arnprior (ON) ▪ North Vancouver (BC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Squamish (BC)¹³ ▪ Vancouver (BC) ▪ West Vancouver (BC) ▪ White Rock (BC)
Perimeter of wading pools splash pads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Toronto (9m) ▪ West Vancouver (6m) 	
Perimeter of municipal swimming pools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Barrie (25m) ▪ Cornwall (ON) (9m) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Woodstock (30m)
Zoos (as specified)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Peterborough (ON) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Toronto (ON)
Cemeteries on municipal property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridgewater (NS) 	
Grounds of a town building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridgewater (NS) 	
University/college grounds¹⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ no bylaws yet known but some universities have 100% smoke-free campus policy (e.g. Dalhousie and Acadia) 	
Hospital grounds¹⁵	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Woodstock (ON) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many hospitals voluntarily prohibit smoking on their property
Street or sidewalk along parade route	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridgewater (NS) 	
Particular outdoor street/walkway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Calgary (AB) (Olympic Plaza) ▪ Truro (NS) (Inglis Place) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ White Rock (BC) (the promenade; the pier)
Trail or path on municipal property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Barrie (ON) ▪ Kentville (NS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bridgewater (NS) ▪ Vancouver (BC)

⁹ Some municipalities prohibit smoking in transit shelters, or within distance of transit shelters, but not all bus stops.

¹⁰ School Area designated under Motor Vehicle Act

¹¹ certain streets, 8am-4pm on school days

¹² In the U.S., many municipalities in California and on the Eastern seaboard prohibit smoking on beaches, as do some municipalities in Australia and New Zealand.

¹³ Only applies to municipal beaches

¹⁴ Yukon territorial law bans smoking on the property of Yukon College.

¹⁵ P.E.I. legislation bans smoking on almost all hospital grounds.