



Ashfield Council

Smoke free Council sports fields and children's playgrounds policy

May 2011

This policy will be reviewed triennially by: Governance
Next review date: 2014



Title:	Smoke free Council sports fields and children's playgrounds policy
Summary:	This policy prohibits smoking at Council sports venues; provides a minimum distance for smoking near children's playgrounds; and prohibits Council sponsorship of events which receive tobacco company funding.
Record Number:	
Date of Issue:	Updated June 2011
Approval:	Council Resolution 9 November 2004
Version Control:	Version 1
Contact Officer:	Manager Regulatory Services
Relevant References:	Heart Foundation Fact Sheet 2
Main Legislative or Regulatory References:	Local Government Act (NSW) 1993
Applicable Delegation of Authority:	Council rangers Council Aquatic Centre Life Guards
Related Ashfield Council Policy:	Ashfield Aquatic Centre resolution
Related Ashfield Council Procedure:	



Policy Background

In May 2003, Launceston City Council became the first Local Government Area to prohibit smoking around children's playgrounds and some sporting fields. Since then a number of other councils have adopted smoke-free playground policies and sporting venues. These policies resulting in the establishment of smoking exclusion zones around playground equipment and council sporting venues have been well received by residents. According to the Heart Foundation (2007), 75 Councils in NSW have banned smoking in Council playgrounds and 61 have also included sport fields.

Policy Purpose

In 2004. Ashfield Council has resolved to:

1. ban smoking within 10 metres of all children's playground equipment;
2. ban smoking around all playing fields and sporting grounds;
3. erect signage around playground equipment and playing fields to indicate that these designated areas are smoke free; and
4. ensure that any events run or sponsored by Council are smoke-free and do not receive any funding/sponsorship from tobacco companies or their subsidiaries

Policy Objectives

The objectives of Ashfield Council in banning smoking in various Council areas are to:

- Improve the health of the Ashfield community;
- Improve public amenity and maintenance of Council property;
- Raise community awareness of the issues associated with smoking;
- Provide community leadership in taking measures to protect the health and social wellbeing of the community particularly around sporting venues and children's playgrounds;
- Minimise cigarette butt pollution on Council owned parks and other open space areas.

Implementation and access

There is substantial evidence linking exposure to second-hand smoke with a range of serious and life threatening health impacts including heart disease, cancer, asthma and other respiratory problems.

Children exposed to second-hand smoke are at an increased risk of asthma, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), acute respiratory infections and ear problems. While most of the evidence relates to indoor exposure, there is emerging evidence on how smoking affects air quality in outdoor locations such as playgrounds. A recent study which measured cigarette smoke levels in a variety of outdoor locations showed that a person sitting near a



smoker in an outdoor area could be exposed to levels of cigarette smoke similar to the exposure of someone sitting in an indoor tavern where smoking is allowed. Therefore, the second-hand smoke in outdoor areas where people tend to congregate, sports stadiums and concert venues etc can present a real health risk to patrons and staff.

There is also evidence to suggest that smoking bans, support smokers who are trying to quit as well as reduce their overall cigarette consumption.

Fifty four percent of smokers who had tried to quit found that seeing someone with a cigarette was a trigger to relapse, while 40% said that smelling a cigarette was a trigger to relapse, according to a 2006 study by the Centre for Health Research and Psycho-oncology (Cancer Council NSW).

In addition to the health impacts, cigarettes are an environmental issue. Cigarette butts take up to five years to break down. Cigarette butts are consistently one of the most common items found during Clean Up Australia Day. Almost 50% of all litter in urban areas is tobacco related products. Outdoor smoking bans can help to reduce the amount of cigarette butt litter and provide a substantial cost saving through reduced clean-up costs.

Legislative powers

Under the Local Government Act 1993 Council has the power to:

- Erect suitably worded and strategically placed notices in public places within the local government area prohibiting smoking (for Ashfield this will be the aquatic centre, children's playground and sporting venues (s632);
- Serve, by means of an authorised person, a penalty notice upon any person who fails to comply with the terms of any such notice (s679)
- Demand by means of an authorised person, the names and address of any person reasonably suspected of failing to comply with the terms of any such notice (s680);
- Remove by means of an authorised person, from community land, any person who fails to comply with the terms of any such notice (s681).

Authorised persons

The following Council staff are authorised persons; Council rangers and pool life guards.

Signage

The following areas will be signposted wherever practicable, to provide smoke free zones:

- Within 10 metres of children's playgrounds
- Around Council playing fields, sports grounds and at outdoor sporting facilities.