

## **TOBACCO-FREE MSU POLICY: FAQ 2011/2012**

### **Why is MSU going tobacco-free?**

- The university seeks to provide a clean and healthy environment for all students, employees and visitors. A tobacco-free campus policy will:
  - Protect people from unwanted and involuntary exposure to tobacco and passive smoke;
  - Promote cessation and create a supporting environment for those trying to quit tobacco;
  - Create a cleaner learning and working environment.
- According to the CDC, Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in the U.S., killing an estimated 443,000 Americans annually. Closer to home, 1,400 Montanans are estimated to die each year from smoking; many others die from exposure to secondhand smoke and smokeless tobacco. The CDC estimates that between one third and one half of all smokers will die from their addiction to tobacco.
- Multiple studies affirm that there are no safe levels of exposure to secondhand smoke, including outdoor smoke.
- Campus is the number one location where MSU students are exposed to secondhand smoke:
  - 73% of MSU students report being exposed to smoke on campus;
  - 21% of MSU students report immediate health problems, such as headaches, eye irritation, trouble breathing, allergic reactions and other health effects;
  - Pregnant women, children, people with bronchitis, respiratory problems, asthma, heart conditions and cancer are especially susceptible to passive smoke.

### **Why include smokeless tobacco?**

- Smokeless tobacco use at MSU is nearly four times the national average. A tobacco-free policy sends a consistent health message that there are no safe forms of tobacco. Tobacco-free sends a consistent health message and promotes the health of all campus members, including users.
  - Smokeless tobacco contains at least 28 cancer-causing agents, and the amount of nicotine absorbed from spit tobacco is 3 to 4 times the amount delivered by cigarettes .
  - Smokeless tobacco can lead to oral cancers, gum disease and increased nicotine addiction (U.S. Surgeon General). Snuff and snus have been found to increase the risk of cancer, stroke and fatal cardiovascular disease (The International Agency for Research on Cancer).
  - While marketing of cigarettes is on the decline, marketing of smokeless products has risen 400% in the last 20 years (FTC). Marketing of smokeless tobacco products target youth by associating the product with sports and adventure activities, implying that use is part of a healthy lifestyle.
- Tobacco-free policies are becoming a national standard for college campuses, advocated by major health agencies. MSU will be the sixth campus in Montana to adopt this measure.

### **Isn't it my right to use tobacco?**

- Tobacco use is a legal product for adults, but the university owns campus property and is able to establish policies that protect the health of all campus members. A tobacco-free policy does not prohibit use, it merely establishes where use can occur. In addition, Montana law recognizes that an individual's right to breathe smoke-free air takes priority over an individual's desire to smoke (MCA 5-40-102).

### **Does the tobacco-free MSU policy extend to other campus-owned property?**

- Yes, the policy encompasses all university owned property, including XXXX. Tobacco use is prohibited in all university owned vehicles.

### **Are there designated smoking areas on campus?**

- No. The use of tobacco is prohibited on all campus grounds.

### **Is there a map that shows the exact areas included in the policy?**

- TBD

### **What about football games, concerts or other public events?**

- All events occurring on campus or on campus-property will be covered by the tobacco-free policy. Signage, electronic and printed notices will be provided to visitors at games and events to inform them of the policy.

### **How will the policy be enforced?**

- Initially there will be an emphasis on education and peer enforcement as the campus and community learn about the policy. Repeat violations will be handled like any other conduct violations, either through the Dean of Student's office or the employee's department.
- A recent study of tobacco-free campuses found that most campus members will respect the policy once they are informed. Serious enforcement problems are infrequent and are managed by campus officials.

### **What should I do if I see someone using tobacco on campus?**

- The policy can best be enforced by all members taking an active role in informing people that a tobacco-free policy is in effect. The large majority of MSU students and employees support a tobacco-free environment, so it is appropriate for you to speak up.
- If you notice an area where people are consistently violating the policy, you can report this to the MSU Tobacco-free Task Force by writing to [healthpromotion@montana.edu](mailto:healthpromotion@montana.edu).

### **How should I respond if someone gets angry or aggressive?**

- Do not continue to speak to anyone who becomes angry or confrontational. Walk away and report the violation to: TBD

### **What about ceremonial use of tobacco?**

- Specific American Indian ceremonial activities are protected by the American Indian Religious Freedom Act. Use must be approved in advance by campus administration or designee.

### **How can I quit (or help someone I know quit)?**

- Tobacco-free policies have been shown to encourage people to quit. These policies also support those who are trying to quit. Free quit-kits are available in the Health Promotion office (second floor of the Student Health Service).
- The Montana Quitline 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) provides individual coaching and free or low-cost cessation support, including nicotine replacement therapies.
- For more information on campus and community cessation support, visit [www.montana.edu/health/tobaccofree](http://www.montana.edu/health/tobaccofree).

### **I am interested in helping with tobacco-free efforts on campus. Who should I contact?**

- MSU Health Promotion has an ongoing task force and an active student group working to prevent tobacco use on campus and support cessation. Contact Health Promotion at 994-7337 or [healthpromotion@montana.edu](mailto:healthpromotion@montana.edu).

### **References**

- Center for Disease Control & Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco>
- National Institutes on Drug Abuse: <http://www.nida.nih.gov/researchreports/nicotine/nicotine.html>
- National Institutes of Health <http://tobaccofree.nih.gov/>
- U.S. Surgeon General's Report. 2006. *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*.
- U.S. Surgeon General's Report, 2010. How Tobacco Smoke Causes Disease
- Montana Code Annotated, 2009, 50-40-102
- Stanford Outdoor Smoke Tobacco Study <http://tobaccosmoke.exposurescience.org/outdoor-tobacco-smoke>
- American College Health Association. 2009. *Position Statement on Tobacco on College and University Campuses*.
- 2010 MSU Tobacco Use & Attitude Survey, N=2745