

# Rockford Park District Clean Air Ordinance Q and A



## **Q: What is the updated Clean Air Ordinance?**

The Rockford Park District Board of Commissioners unanimously approved the Code of Ordinances in February 2017. The Clean Air Ordinance prohibits smoking *entirely* at Park District facilities, parks, museums, and any Park District property with the exception of public golf courses where adult smoking is permitted beyond 50 feet of enclosed/partially-enclosed spaces on golf course playing fields in the company of consenting adults and absent assembly by the general public. Smoking will also be prohibited at select youth specific golf areas such as Alpine Hills Golf Center and Learning Links at Ingersoll Golf Course. The ordinance includes any “lighted or vaporized substance in any manner or form,” including cigars, cigarettes, pipes, and e-cigarettes.

## **Q: When does this ordinance take effect?**

The updated ordinance takes effect District-wide on June 1, 2017 except at Magic Waters Waterpark where the updated ordinance begins on May 27, 2017 as the facility opens for the season.

## **Q: Why is smoking allowed at the golf courses?**

Smoking will continue to be allowed at golf courses as golf is considered a social sport and one where consenting adults are present. To help us maintain our reputation as the best mid-size city for golf in the USA we have to remain competitive in order to ensure that people in the community continue to enjoy the game of golf at multiple courses for decades to come.

## **Q: Will smoking be allowed at golf course driving range?**

No, this is an area where the general public is present and second hand smoke would be difficult to avoid.

## **Q: Can you smoke in your own vehicle on Rockford Park District property?**

No, it is difficult to avoid second hand smoke with thousands of visitors using public parks, spaces, and facilities which include traveling through parking lots and other areas. Smoking in personal vehicles will also be prohibited on Rockford Park District Property.

## **Q. What if it is NOT a Park District program or event but located on Park District property?**

The Clean Air Ordinance applies to any Park District property owned, leased or rented space, facility or park.

## **Q: What will happen if I smoke on District property?**

Anyone who violates the Clean Air ordinance shall be liable by a fine:

1. For a first offense in any 12-month period, the fine for violation of this Section 9.18 shall be \$125.00.
2. For a second offense, within one year of the date of conviction for a prior violation hereof, the fine for violation of this Section 9.18 shall be \$250.00.
3. For each succeeding violation within one year from the date of such first conviction, the fine for violation of this Section 9.18 shall be \$500.00.

## **Q: Why did the Rockford Park District make this change?**

The Rockford Park District believes in providing residents with diverse, well-supported, and safe recreational activities for their health, well-being, and entertainment. Updating this ordinance not only has clear health benefits, but it will reduce litter in our parks, and help protect our patrons, particularly youth, from exposure to second-hand smoke.

Did you know? Statistics show that tobacco use continues to be the country's #1 cause of preventable death resulting in approximately 443,000 Americans dying each year because of smoking-related illnesses. In addition, roughly 8.4 million Americans are hospitalized each year with smoking-related illnesses and disease.

# Rockford Park District Clean Air Ordinance Q and A



Did you know? Secondhand smoke harms children and adults, and the only way to fully protect nonsmokers is to eliminate smoking in all homes, worksites, and public places.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, in children, secondhand smoke causes the following:

- Ear infections
- More frequent and severe asthma attacks
- Respiratory symptoms (for example, coughing, sneezing, and shortness of breath)
- Respiratory infections (bronchitis and pneumonia)
- A greater risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

In adults who have never smoked, secondhand smoke can cause:

- Heart disease
- Lung cancer
- Stroke

Over the last few years several Illinois Park Districts have revised their Clean Air Ordinance starting with Chicago Park District in 2014. More recently Schaumburg, Bourbonnais, and DeKalb have strengthened their ordinance as well. The updates were also supported locally by Winnebago County Health Department and Ortho Illinois.

## **Q: How is this going to make our community healthy?**

The Rockford Park District believes park space and recreation are essential to the quality of life and is committed to transforming our region into a Top 25 community by 2025. The District wants to do our part to make sure residents live healthy lifestyles and make informed choices. Entirely smoke free environments will help ensure that visitors in public parks, spaces, and facilities can avoid second hand smoke.

## **Q: How was this decision reached?**

In order for the Rockford Park District Board of Commissioners to make this decision, the Rockford Park District polled citizens and visitors at various Rockford Park District facilities including our golf courses. A poll via Twitter and Facebook was also conducted by the Rockford Register Star where voters favored the revisions.

## **Q: Will signage at parks and facilities be updated?**

Various signage throughout Rockford Park District facilities and parks has or will be changed to reflect the updated ordinance.

