

# New Bedford Makes Public Beaches, Parks, Playgrounds and Zoo Smoke Free

In an effort to encourage residents and visitors to embrace healthy living, the City of New Bedford is posting new “smoke-free” signs at its beaches, parks, playgrounds, and zoo. The signage reflects the New Bedford Board of Health’s progressive no smoking regulations, some of the most precedent-setting in the Commonwealth. The regulations prohibit smoking in public places and include a ban on the use of nicotine delivery products such as e-cigarettes.



Adverse health effects from cigarette smoking account for more than 440,000 deaths each year, or nearly one out of every five individuals, according to national health statistics. The City’s new signs are intended to curb smoking and the production of harmful second-hand smoke which can lead to serious health conditions including cancer, asthma, respiratory infections, and heart disease. Children are especially vulnerable to the harmful effects of second hand smoke. Cigarette butts are made of acetate and do not degrade easily in the environment, they are also a source of filth and can be dangerous if eaten by children, pets and wildlife.

“Children exposed to second-hand smoke inhale many of the same cancer-causing substances as smokers. There is no safe level

of exposure; even brief exposures can be harmful. Promoting an entirely smoke-free environment is necessary to protect both smokers and non-smokers alike,” said Brenda Weis, New Bedford Health Director.

Creating and installing the signs was a team effort involving municipal departments of Health, Zoo, Parks Recreation & Beaches, Public Infrastructure, and Traffic, as well as community partner Southcoast Health System.

“Parks, playgrounds and beaches should be healthy, clean public spaces that all residents and visitors can enjoy. Promoting smoke-free public places will ensure that the thousands of people, particularly the children, who visit these areas daily will enjoy fresh air in a safe, healthy environment,” said Patricia Andrade, M.D., Chairperson of the New Bedford Board of Health.

For more information or to view the signs online, please visit: <http://www.newbedford-ma.gov/health/overview.html>