

2.4 Tobacco Use Policy Success Stories



Clean Air Policy

the people

The University of Maine at Machias (UMM) is a public institution of higher education that employs 113 part-time and full-time employees and has approximately 1,000 students. The UMM Healthy Campus Committee was established in November 2000 to address health issues on campus that impact the college community and to create healthy changes in the environment and population. The committee is composed of student, staff, and faculty representatives.

the need

Since UMM campus buildings became smoke-free a number of years ago, ashtrays had been attached to the walls of all entrances to collect the butts and trash. The result was a cloud of smoke filling the most heavily trafficked entrances, cigarette litter all over the grounds near the entrances, and smoke blowing in any nearby open windows to offices and classrooms. The Healthy Campus Committee wanted to address the situation that existed at most campus building entrances from people smoking in the doorways.

the idea

The Healthy Campus Committee (HCC) decided to build two smoking shelters away from all doorways and windows to eliminate the exposure to second-hand smoke for nonsmokers inside and outside of campus buildings. Simultaneously, the HCC created a new “Clean Air Policy” for the UMM campus to designate specific smoke-free zones and designated smoking areas.

the idea at work

The HCC first decided on the two locations for its designated smoking areas. These were strategically placed on campus near, but not on, high traffic walkways. First, a gazebo was built across the street from the Library/Classroom area. This was on the corner of the mall within easy access to people coming from these buildings. It was designed and built by the UMM Physical Plant carpenter in the spring of 2002 and was ready for use in the fall. A second smoking area provides a covered picnic table and was set up at the opposite end of the mall.

2.4 Tobacco Use Policy Success Stories

Clean Air Policy (continued)

The Healthy Campus Committee developed and implemented a new “Clean Air Policy” during the winter of 2002 prohibiting smoking anywhere on the western side of campus except within the two smoking shelters. The campus community was made aware of the change in policy throughout the spring through a variety of promotional strategies. First, posters were developed to clearly convey the new policy, the rationale for it, and even included a phone number for the Maine Tobacco HelpLine. (Please see the poster on next page.) Educational sessions and meetings were also held across campus to discuss the policy change. Finally, business cards were printed with the UMM Clean Air Policy on one side and some resources for quitting on the other side. These cards were placed in locations where students could easily pick one up and tactfully hand it to a Clean Air Policy offender. (Please see cards on next page.)

the costs

The HCC used approximately \$500 from a grant from the Maine Cardiovascular Health Program to construct the gazebos and develop appropriate materials. The University supplied additional funds to purchase the remaining building materials for the Gazebo. The Physical Plant supplied and paid the salary of the carpenter.

the results

In spite of the expected resistance to the new policy from some smokers and campus members concerned about “smoker’s rights,” the project has moved forward quite smoothly. The campus building entrances are now all smoke-free. Smokers are using the shelters and the trash receptacles to contain the litter. In the fall of 2003, the residence halls went completely smoke-free and a smoking shelter was built in a centrally located area near both halls and the cafeteria. In effect the Clean Air Policy has been spread to the entire campus.

This project has successfully addressed the problem of smoke-filled doorways and the resulting unhealthy exposure to secondhand smoke. The litter continues to be somewhat of a problem, as people don’t always use the trash cans for their cigarette butts.



contact(s)

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UMM Clean Air Policy poster & card

UMM Clean Air Policy

The University has adopted the recommendations of the student, faculty, and staff Healthy Campus Committee for our 2002-2003 "clean air policy." Under this policy, the following rules apply:

- UMM is smoke-free within all campus buildings, with the only exception being designated student rooms in the residence halls.
- A smoke-free zone extends west of that part of O'Brien Avenue that runs from Powers Hall to the CLL, as well as the entire CLL area. This includes areas around the Science Building, the Merrill Library, and Torrey Hall.
- The only smoking permitted in this general area will be in the following two designated smoking shelters:
 - the gazebo on the mall, behind the campus map sign; and
 - the covered picnic area behind Torrey Hall.
- Smoking is prohibiting within 25 feet of all other campus building exterior surfaces and doorways, except in designated smoking areas.

THE MAINE TOBACCO HELPLINE
1-800-207-1230
IT'S FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL. AND IT WORKS.

The University recognizes the need to create and maintain an environmental quality, which sustains and enhances the general health and well being of its faculty, staff, students, and visitors. The U.S. Public Health Service documents on the health consequences of smoking have conclusively established cigarette smoking as the largest single preventable cause of premature death and disability in the United States. The intent of this policy is to protect the choice of the non-smoking campus community to breathe smoke-free air.

The UMM Health Center assists efforts to stop tobacco use by providing literature, and support to students and employees desiring to quit tobacco use. UMM employees covered by Anthem health insurance are eligible for benefits to cover smoking cessation programs, pharmaceuticals, and physician visits.

This policy is also intended to reduce the environmental impact of cigarette litter. Tobacco users are responsible for proper disposal of their cigarette butts in designated containers. The plastic filters take about 25 years to decompose and toxic chemicals the filters are designed to trap can leak out into a aquatic ecosystems. (www.cigarettelitter.com)

Implementation of the campus clean air policy will be the responsibility of student, faculty member, staff person and visitor on campus. Individual units shall be responsible for enforcement within their units.

Need Help Quitting?
Contact the UMM Health Center at 255-1275
or
Maine Tobacco Helpline
1-800-207-1230
Free and Confidential Assistance

UMM UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT MACHIAS
JUST A REMINDER:
SMOKING IS PROHIBITED WITHIN 25 FEET OF CAMPUS BUILDING EXTERIOR SURFACES & DOORWAYS, EXCEPT IN DESIGNATED SMOKING AREAS. SMOKING SHELTERS ARE LOCATED IN THE GAZEBO ACROSS FROM THE SCIENCE BUILDING, AND AT THE PICNIC TABLE BEHIND TORREY HALL.

THE CLEAN AIR POLICY IS IN EFFECT.