

**Frequently Asked Questions  
Smoke-free Campus Initiative  
Boise State University**

**Q: Why are we becoming a smoke-free campus?**

A: The health and safety of faculty, staff, students and visitors is a top priority for Boise State University. The Surgeon General of the United States has determined that tobacco smoking is the nation's leading preventable cause of premature death and disability. Tobacco smoke is hazardous to the health of smokers and non-smokers alike. To promote a safe and healthful work environment, Boise State has adopted this policy to encourage smokers to reduce or eliminate their consumption of tobacco, and to protect non-smokers from exposure to tobacco smoke.

**Q: Why was smoking selected versus other health risks to address?**

A: Tobacco is the only product that when used properly, as intended, leads to serious illness and premature death.

Consider the facts:

1. Cigarette smoking has been identified as the most important source of preventable morbidity (disease and illness) and premature mortality (death) worldwide.
2. Smoking-related diseases claim an estimated 438,000 American lives each year, including those affected indirectly, such as babies born prematurely due to prenatal maternal smoking and victims of "secondhand" exposure to tobacco's carcinogens.

*American Lung Association, <http://www.lungusa.org>*

We also know:

1. Mental health disorders have been strongly associated with smoking, especially among adolescents and young adults.
2. College students who smoke are more likely to participate in the risky behaviors (high-risk drinking, illicit drug use, high-risk sexual behavior) that pose some of the greatest health threats to 18-24 year olds.
3. Smokers have lower grade point averages (GPA) than nonsmokers. The Harvard College Alcohol Study found that smokers are 27.0% less likely than nonsmokers to have an above B grade average (Rigotti, 2000). Daily smokers were found to have even lower GPAs than high-risk drinkers.

*Tobacco Technical Assistance Consortium, <http://www.ttac.org/college/facts/negative-effects.html>*

**Q: What areas of campus will the smoke-free policy cover?**

A: The new policy applies to all university property, other properties owned or leased by the university, and all university leased or owned vehicles.

**Q: What about smoking on sidewalks on and around campus?**

A: Boise State controls all sidewalks on campus, whether next to the road or not. Therefore, the smoking policy applies to sidewalks on or around the perimeter of campus.

**Q: What about smoking on the greenbelt?**

A: Boise State controls the section of the greenbelt from Capital to Broadway up to the high water mark. Therefore, smoking is prohibited on this section of the greenbelt.

**Q: Can I smoke in my car?**

A: Smoking on all Boise State property, including in cars parked on the property, is prohibited.

**Q: Is there a clear defined designated smoking area for employees, students and visitors?**

A: No. Providing a place to smoke does not support the campus's goal to create a healthier environment. The majority of smokers self-report a strong desire to quit smoking, but are unsuccessful in their efforts each year. Boise State is working to eliminate the triggers -like designated tobacco use areas - that make tobacco cessation difficult.

**Q: How will students, employees, visitors and the community know of this new policy?**

A: Health, Wellness and Counseling Services will coordinate university efforts for policy notification, education, promotion, support and assessment to ensure successful implementation.

**Q: How will the policy be enforced?**

A: The success of this policy will depend on the thoughtfulness, consideration and cooperation of smokers and nonsmokers. Faculty, staff and students have a collective responsibility to promote the safety and health of the campus community and therefore share in the responsibility of enforcement. Individuals observed smoking are to be reminded in a professional and courteous manner of the university policy. Boise State reserves the right to initiate disciplinary procedures against any individual found to be in continuous violation of this policy.

**Q: What about Boise State's neighbors?**

A: Boise State asks our students and employees to help maintain a positive relationship with our neighbors. Smoking off campus does not give anyone the right to litter on private or public property. A letter will be sent to Boise State neighbors informing them of our policy and encouraging open communication, if problems arise.

**Q: Isn't smoking a personal, legal right?**

A: Court rulings maintain that tobacco users do not have the legal right to expose others to second hand smoke, a Class A carcinogen, and they are not entitled to protection against discrimination as "addicts" or as "disabled persons".

**Q: Will there be an impact on enrollment when a campus goes smoke-free?**

A: It is anticipated that the promotion of Boise State as an active, vibrant, healthy campus community will increase interest in university enrollment. Ty Patterson, Director of the Center for Excellence for Tobacco-Free, who has helped numerous higher education institutions over the country go tobacco-free, says he has "not found one (university) that has identified a decline in enrollment" due to implementation of a smoke-free policy.