



**For Immediate Release**

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## **How Popular Are Smoke-Free Outdoor Spaces? Even Smokers Like Them**

Milwaukee—Like a lot of smokers, Amanda is trying to quit. What’s helping her to reduce the number of cigarettes she smokes every day is the lack of spaces where she is allowed to smoke.

“When I’m in places where I can’t smoke, it’s encouraging,” Amanda said. “I don’t smell it, so I don’t feel like I’m enticed to go smoke. Even bars and restaurants are smoke free. I can just enjoy myself without thinking about smoking.”

Even her eight-year-old daughter has declared more spaces to be smoke-free. Amanda can’t light up in the car when they’re together or in their home. “She always tells me, ‘I’m helping you today,’” Amanda said.

If Milwaukeeans have anything to do about it, they’d follow Amanda’s daughter’s lead and help her quit smoking by expanding smoke-free spaces to outdoor events, too.

A whopping 86% surveyed in Milwaukee want to enjoy smoke- and vape-free outdoor festivals, such as Summerfest, Irish Fest, Jazz in the Park, and PrideFest, which would help smokers like Amanda cut down or finally quit smoking.

When [the City of Milwaukee Tobacco-Free Alliance](#) surveyed nearly 600 people, just 14% said that smoking and vaping should be allowed everywhere at summer festivals. In contrast, 44% said that the entire grounds should be smoke and vape free, while 42% said smoking and vaping should be restricted to a smoking section on festival grounds. Respondents said they were concerned about being exposed to second-hand smoke, triggering asthma and allergies, and developing cancer.

Currently, Milwaukeeans enjoy clean outdoor air at Miller Park, the Fiserv Forum arena district, Milwaukee County Zoo, and Milwaukee County Beer Gardens. [Chill on the Hill](#) is currently celebrating its fourth season as a smoke- and vape-free outdoor concert series.

In January, 18 organizations, including the Milwaukee Fire Department and the Milwaukee Health Department, submitted a letter to the city’s Department of Public Works urging them to consider designating Henry Maier Festival Park, home to Summerfest and ethnic and cultural festivals, smoke-and vape-free.

“When people attend outdoor events and festivals, breathing in someone else’s smoke can really spoil the experience,” said Anneke Mohr, coordinator of the City of Milwaukee Tobacco-Free Alliance.

In addition to helping smokers quit, smoke- and vape-free outdoor spaces reduce unwanted trash in our environment. Beach cleanups conducted by the Alliance for Great Lakes found that 41% of trash collected at Milwaukee beaches was from cigarettes or tobacco products, including cigarette butts, plastic cigar tips, and little cigar wrappers. Cigarette butts are not biodegradable and damage our environment.

“The simple solution is to limit the outdoor spaces where smoking and vaping are allowed,” Mohr said. “Milwaukeeans say they want smoke-free and vape-free festivals. Let’s listen to them.”

*To learn more about the City of Milwaukee Tobacco-Free Alliance or smoke-free outdoor spaces, contact Anneke Mohr at [amohr@communityadvocates.net](mailto:amohr@communityadvocates.net) or 414-270-2948.*