



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

Senator Flanagan Announces State Parks Going Smoke-Free

JOHN J. FLANAGAN April 13, 2012

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Senator John Flanagan (2nd Senate District) is informing residents that the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSPRHP) has announced that it will create smoke-free areas in outdoor settings within state parks and historic sites including around playgrounds and pools.

"State Parks and Historic Sites should be healthy and clean places for our visitors, especially our youngest guests," said State Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey in a recent press release. "It makes sense to ensure all visitors have a place to go in our parks to enjoy fresh air, while also protecting children playing at our pools and playgrounds from the dangers of second-hand smoke and reducing litter from discarded cigarette butts."

"Everyone who visits the outdoor treasures we have in New York should be able to enjoy them without being subject to second-hand smoke. Our state parks are one of the things that make our state great and we need to keep them as fresh and clean as possible. I applaud the Parks Office and Commissioner Harvey for this common-sense policy change that will hopefully make our parks more enjoyable for our residents and for all who will visit our great state," stated Senator Flanagan.

"Creating designated smoke-free zones in State Parks will ensure that the millions of people who visit these sites each year will be able to enjoy outdoor activities in a safe and healthy environment," State Health Commissioner Nirav R. Shah, M.D., M.P.H., said. "We applaud State and local efforts to develop no smoking areas in parks and other public venues, and encourage people of all ages to take advantage of the variety of recreational activities

offered at State Parks that promote healthy living."

According to a NYSPRHP press release, the new policy will create smoke-free areas around all playgrounds and swimming pools, as well as other zones specifically designated as no-smoking areas. These vary from state park to state park but may include specific swimming beaches or areas of swimming beaches; pavilions and picnic shelters; outdoor seating areas that are nearby food and beverage concessions; areas where outdoor environmental education programs are held; or public gardens.

There will be signs at each outdoor location where smoking is prohibited to provide information to park attendees. Residents will still be allowed to smoke outdoors at all locations that are not deemed smoke-free zones including being permitted by those who stay at state park campsites.

Smoking is already prohibited inside all buildings within state parks and historic sites under New York's Clean Indoor Air Act.

While the NYSPRHP expects that most who visit state parks will voluntarily comply with the new smoke-free zones, State Park staff will inform anyone who smokes in newly designated non-smoking areas of the new rules. Individuals who continue to refuse to comply could be cited for disorderly conduct by State Park Police and other law enforcement agencies.

LIST OF DESIGNATED NO-SMOKING AREAS ON LONG ISLAND

Swimming Pool Complexes including Jones Beach East and West Bath-house complexes, Montauk Downs Pool complex and Heckscher Pool complex - Smoking shall be prohibited for pool complexes within the Long Island State Park Region. The pool complex shall include the swimming pool, deck, patio, locker rooms, hallways, etc. In other words, the entire pool complex shall be off limits to smoking.

Playgrounds - Smoking shall be prohibited from all playgrounds within the Long Island State Park Region. This prohibition extends to all state parks within the region. Specifically, smoking is prohibited within 50 feet of any playground or playground fixture.

Picnic Pavilions & Fixed Covered Seating Areas - Smoking shall be prohibited within 50 feet of all picnic pavilions and fixed covered seating areas throughout the Long Island State Park Region. Sun shelters and rain shelters with seats and/or benches shall be considered fixed covered seating areas.

Bandshell - Smoking shall be prohibited within the Jones Beach Bandshell and adjacent seating area at the Central Mall within Jones Beach State Park. Smoking shall also be prohibited within 50 feet of the entranceways to, and exits from, the Bandshell.

Games Areas - Smoking shall be prohibited within the games areas of Jones Beach State Park specifically the paddle tennis, shuffleboard, and miniature golf areas.

Volleyball Courts - Smoking shall be prohibited for the volleyball court areas at Jones Beach and Robert Moses State Parks.

Jones Beach Theatre - Smoking shall be prohibited within the Jones Beach Theatre.

Tennis Courts - Smoking shall be prohibited within 50 feet of all tennis courts throughout the Long Island State Park Region: Bethpage State Park tennis complex and outdoor courts as well as the outdoor courts at Hempstead Lake State Park and Montauk Downs State Park.

Gas Stations - Smoking shall be prohibited within 50 feet of all gas station complex locations.

Park Preserves - In keeping with the natural aspect of the New York State park preserves, smoking will be prohibited within Connetquot River State Park Preserve, Caleb Smith State Park Preserve, Caumsett State Historic Park Preserve and Hallock State Park Preserve. This smoking prohibition extends to all public facilities and acreage at each park preserve.

Concession Areas - Smoking shall be prohibited in all food and beverage concession areas, golf professional shop areas, beach shops and any other concession locations. This prohibition shall not only include the indoor areas which is prohibited by State Law but shall also extend to exterior areas within fifty feet of the entrance(s) or exit(s) of any and all concession locations throughout the Long Island State Park Region.

Building Entrances & Exits - Smoking shall be prohibited within 50 feet of entrances to, and exits from, all Long Island State Park facilities and buildings.

Residents who would like a list of all designated non-smoking areas in New York State Parks should visit the NYSPRHP web site at www.nysparks.com.