



Reasons for a Tobacco-Free Campus

For the health and safety of all Rochester Community and Technical College staff, faculty, students, and visitors.

- “Smoking is the leading cause of preventable death each year in the United States, claiming more than 443,000 lives each year.”¹
- “There is no safe amount of secondhand smoke. Breathing even a little secondhand smoke can be dangerous. Breathing secondhand smoke for even a short time can have immediate bad effects.”²
- The author of a study that measured outdoor air pollution from secondhand smoke in entranceways on a college campus stated, “It is clear that tobacco smoke pollution outdoors at significant distances from smokers must be considered as significantly unhealthy. Thus, while students or faculty asthmatics pass through a cloud of smoke, levels might be sufficient to trigger an attack, and certainly are high enough to pose a nuisance to all. Moreover, smoking in proximity to doorways or air intakes might easily be inducted into the building through posing both acute and chronic threats to building occupants.”³
- Over 70% of students and faculty and staff responding to a January 2009 survey do not use tobacco products and 75% of the respondents do not use tobacco on the Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC) campus.⁴
- Students who report using smoking tobacco within the past 30 days have a lower mean grade point average than students who report not using smoking tobacco within the past 30 days (3.21 vs. 3.36 respectively, $p < 0.0001$).¹²
- Examination of additional data reveals a relationship also exists between the use of smokeless tobacco and grade point average. Students who report using smokeless tobacco within the past 30 days have a lower mean GPA than students who report not using smokeless tobacco within the past 30 days (**3.06** vs. **3.34**, respectively, $p < 0.0001$).

¹²



Tobacco-free policies have been shown to decrease tobacco use and increase cessation attempts and success. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13

- Many individuals who use tobacco have the desire to quit.
- Policies can prevent individuals from initiating and/or increasing tobacco use.
- Students between the ages of 18-24 in particular are still at risk of initiating and/or increasing tobacco use. This population is one of the only to see increases in tobacco rate use in the past 10 years. One reason for this is that since the Master Settlement Agreement in 1998, the targeting of young adults by the tobacco industry has dramatically increased.^{14, 15}

Being tobacco-free increases a student's success in the classroom and in the workplace.

- A student's state of wellness affects their ability to learn, and RCTC is committed to providing an environment that is most conducive for learning.
- More and more employers are implementing stricter policies on tobacco for many of the same reasons RCTC has, and it is important that our students are prepared for the workforce.
- The Mayo Clinic has implemented tobacco-free policies on its entire campus complex.
- All Minnesota work sites including bars and restaurants are smoke-free.
- Individuals who do not use tobacco are more attractive to businesses because research supports they are absent less, more productive, and do not have as high as of health care costs.

A tobacco-free campus increases the financial stability of the college.



- RCTC can save money on health care costs for employees because research has shown that people who use tobacco incur more medical costs, see physicians more often and be admitted to hospitals for longer periods than nonsmokers. According to the American Cancer Society, a study of health care utilization in 20,831 “employees of a single, large employer showed employees who smoked had more hospital admissions per 1,000 (124 vs. 76), had a longer average length of stay (6.47 vs. 5.03 days), and made six more visits to health care facilities per year than nonsmoking employees.”¹⁶
- In addition, other research has revealed tobacco use burdens employers with other costs such as lost productivity, increased cost of life insurance policies, and mortality costs.¹⁷ One study found that on average, individuals who use tobacco miss 6.16 days of work per year compare to individuals that do not use tobacco, who miss 3.86 days of work per year.¹⁷

To ensure the beauty and professional image of our campus.

To promote a healthy lifestyle for the campus community and its visitors.



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