

# THE TOBACCO FREE TIMES

## Majorities of Counties' Residents Favor Smoke-Free Towns

BY JENNIFER HILL

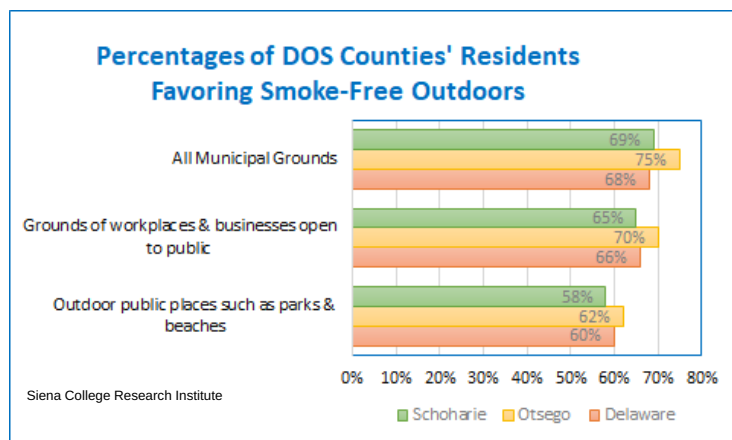
Up to 75% of residents in the tricounty area favor banning smoking in outdoor areas of municipalities, according to a 2020 community survey conducted by Siena College Research Institute (SCRI.)

The survey, completed last June, asked 350 randomly selected residents in each of the three counties for their viewpoints on a range of topics related to tobacco use and advertising. Topics included whether respondents supported smoke-free outdoor policies in public and private spaces.

As the chart below shows, **75% of respondents** in Otsego favor a ban on smoking on all municipal grounds, with 69% and 68% of respondents in Delaware and Schoharie counties, respectively, supporting it. The survey also showed significant support for banning smoking on the grounds of workplaces and businesses open to the public, from 65% in Schoharie to 70% in Otsego.

Smaller majorities of respondents supported smoking bans in outdoor places such as parks and beaches, with 58, 62, and 60% for Schoharie, Otsego, and Delaware, respectively.

SCRI's full survey report can be found [here](#).



**Be SAFE. Be KIND.**

**BUSINESS**

In response to COVID-19, businesses across New York have been working tirelessly to keep their customers and employees safe. The resilience and ingenuity of the entire business community has perhaps never been more important to community health and economic recovery.

As a business owner, you can take an additional step to protect the health of your employees and customers by participating in the "Be safe. Be kind." campaign and keeping smoking and vaping away from your building's entrances.

**Participation IS EASY**

- Post "Be safe. Be kind." window cling (and table tent, if appropriate).
- Encourage employees and customers to keep smoke/vape away from business entrance.
- Ensure that employees who smoke/vape and want to quit know what help is available.

**Benefits ARE MANY**

- Protects customers and employees from potential harm caused by exposure to secondhand smoke and aerosolized vape emissions.
- Supports employee health and wellness.
- Is responsive to the majority of NYS residents who support smoke-free access to public buildings.
- Improves curb appeal by reducing tobacco litter and loitering.

**Wash hands. Keep distance. Wear a mask.**

**Be SAFE. Be KIND.**

To receive **FREE** Be Safe Be Kind window clings, table tents or assistance in developing tobacco-free policies, [contact Jennifer Hill](#), Community Engagement Coordinator, at [Jennifer.Hill003@sphp.com](mailto:Jennifer.Hill003@sphp.com)

## Why an Oneonta Restaurant Owner and Smoker Supports Tobacco-Free Policies

Last February, we ordered delicious sandwiches and cookies from Wise Guy Sammy's on Oneonta's Main Street for our new office's Grand Opening celebration. When Wise Guys' owner and chef, Mike Joubert, found out about our work, he gave us a discount on our order.

We were touched and surprised because Mike is a smoker. Not all smokers are thrilled to learn our work is to assist communities in developing and enacting tobacco-free policies.

"Your work is so important," Mike told us. "You help smokers like me quit."

Recently, I checked back in with Mike to find out more about why he supported tobacco-free policies in places such as public parks and apartment buildings.

"I like tobacco-free parks," Mike replied. "If I'm in the park with my kids, it means I'm going for a few

hours without cigarettes. And it's better for my kids." He also liked no-smoking rules in apartment buildings because they protected residents from second-hand smoke.

"Do you think the policies infringe on smokers' rights?" I asked.

"Smoking infringes on the rights of others. You're not going to die if you don't get to smoke a cigarette."



Mike Joubert and me.

Mike tried to quit smoking last spring, but said it didn't take. I told him about New York State's Smokers' offer of a three months' supply of **FREE nicotine gum**. Call 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487) or visit the Quitline's website, <https://www.nysmokefree.com/>

"I'm going to call them," said Mike about the Quitline's offer. He added, "Even when you smoke, you think, 'Why am I doing that?'"

## Majority of Delaware County Residents Favor Banning Tobacco Sales Near Schools. Here's Why.

BY CHRIS BRADLEY

Walk into a convenience store anywhere in NYS and you will often see tobacco products placed near candy, toys and soda, all near the cashier for quick, impulsive purchases.

That is no accident. The tobacco industry markets their products to young people through colorful packaging and appealing flavors, strategically placing them near youth-tempting items.

The message to youth is clear: like candy, tobacco products are sweet, cheap and easy to get. When retailers sell tobacco near schools and youth-serving organizations, that message is amplified.

TFC-DOS found that nine tobacco retailers in Delaware County are located within 1500 feet of a school. Students can easily stop in the stores on their way to and from school.

This is especially worrisome for places like



A colorful display of tobacco products behind a counter full of candy in a convenience store in Delaware County, sending the message that tobacco products are sweet, cheap and easy-to-get.

Delaware where the adult smoking rate is 23.4%, much higher than the NYS average of 14.2%. The average age of first-time smokers in NYS is 13. The more youth are exposed to the tobacco products, the more likely they will start using them by age 18 and become lifelong users.

To reduce youth exposure to tobacco products, NYS recently passed a law banning exterior advertisements of tobacco products within 1500 feet of schools. The law, however, does not address **the sale** of tobacco products near schools.

Delaware County residents are concerned. Sixty-six percent favor banning tobacco sales in stores located near schools, according to a recent SCRI survey (see our article on p. 1 for more on the survey.)

To learn more about policies that create healthier communities and to involve youth in issues that impact their health, **contact Chris Bradley, Youth Engagement Coordinator, at [Christopher.Bradley@sphp.com](mailto:Christopher.Bradley@sphp.com)**