10.3 Improve Air Quality in Public Spaces

10 – 45 Points

Action Updates

This action has been revised for the **current certification cycle**. A version of this action from the prior program year is available for comparison. Edits are highlighted in yellow. (Last updated 2020)

Objective

Educate on, plan for, and implement policies and projects to improve air quality by reducing smoking and tobacco use and excessive idling of motor vehicles.

Complementary Action:

- Manage Municipal Fleets

What to Do

The more you do, the more points you earn.

1. Gather local and regional data in your community on tobacco use, tobacco cessation, health consequences and costs, and local vendors and points of access. Tobacco use includes but is not limited to cigarettes, cigars, hookahs, electronic cigarettes and smokeless tobacco (such as snuff and chew). Where possible, compare it to state and national metrics. One potential source of tobacco data is your local governmental public health department or district. Research effective educational and policy strategies to reduce smoking and tobacco use in your municipality. **(10 points)**

   Submit: A summary of the data outlined above and a list of educational and policy strategies your municipality will consider to reduce smoking and tobacco use. Please use the provided worksheet to submit your responses.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Websites, Maps, Inventories, Checklists, Assessments, Plans, Ordinances, Policies, Regulations and Resolutions" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

2. Implement or maintain a smoking and tobacco use reduction campaign. For example, conduct ongoing smoking and tobacco reduction education in schools, or place smoke-free and tobacco-free signage in public recreation areas. **(10 points)**

   Submit: Depending on the specific strategy or combination of strategies you chose, submit a list of names of any educational events and the dates that they were held, photographs of signage, or any other documentation that verifies your municipality's ongoing efforts to reduce smoking and tobacco use. If photographs of signage are submitted, please include a caption with the name of each place the pictured signage is located.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Outreach, Education, Programs, Campaigns, Recognition/Designation in External Program, and Funding" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

3. Adopt one or more policies designed to reduce tobacco use in your municipality. The strategies below are illustrative, but other innovative strategies not listed will also be considered. Strategies already required by

Connecticut law, such as providing a smoke-free environment for municipal employees or children in schools, will not be considered for points. **(15 points; credit for one policy per certification cycle)**

- Prohibit smoking and tobacco use in outdoor public places, such as parks, recreational facilities, and at public events. Publicize the prohibition to the community. Post signs to educate the public, and appropriately enforce the prohibition.
- Use licensing to place conditions on tobacco retailers, such as restricting the use of coupons and regulating the placement of products or advertising.
- Use zoning ordinances to require tobacco retailers to be located in zones that do not contain facilities frequented by youth, or to lower the density and quantity of retailers by requiring tobacco retailers to be located a certain distance from one another, limiting the total number of retailers allowed in the area, or prohibiting the transfer or expansion of existing tobacco retailer building.

Submit: A resolution or ordinance formally adopted by your governing body, or a letter from the municipal chief elected official or legislative body to document implementation of one or more policies to reduce tobacco use in your municipality.

Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Websites, Maps, Inventories, Checklists, Assessments, Plans, Ordinances, Policies, Regulations and Resolutions" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

4. Implement or maintain a strategic campaign to prevent excessive idling of motor vehicles. For example, post "no idling" signs, distribute educational materials at municipal events and centers, or provide ongoing training to relevant municipal employees, such as school bus drivers, police officers, or public works vehicle drivers, among other potential strategies. **(10 points)**

   Submit: Depending on the specific strategy or combination of strategies you chose, submit photographs of signage, a list of names of any trainings for municipal staff and the dates that they were held, or any other documentation that verifies your municipality's efforts to reduce excessive idling of motor vehicles.

   Timeframe for Credit: Eligible for new action credit and rolling credit. This action falls under the action type "Outreach, Education, Programs, Campaigns, Recognition/Designation in External Program, and Funding" (see "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for submission requirements).

Timeframe for Credit

Actions can either be "New" or considered for "Rolling Credit."

New Action Credit. Any action completed within the past three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification) is eligible for potential certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you may not claim New Action Credit for items that previously received credit.

Rolling Credit. For any action older than three years (from January 1 of the year seeking certification), you must demonstrate ongoing, currently relevant, and meaningful impact in your community to be considered for certification points. If you are applying for recertification in your year of expiration, you must apply for Rolling Credit for any item that previously received credit, even if it was completed within the past three years.

View the "Timeframe for Credit" Guidance Document for detailed submission requirements.

Engaging Partners

Sustainable CT encourages regional collaboration and other forms of partnership. For every action, please complete the "Partners" box in your submission, indicating the name(s) of any municipalities and/or organizations you partnered with (if any) and a brief description of your municipality's role. If you collaborate with other municipalities, each community will receive points. For additional information, please see the "Partners Guidance Document".

Potential Municipal and Community Collaborators

Staff from your public health department or district, and local health experts, educators, experts in law and health policy and other interested stakeholders could be helpful in implementing this Action, as well as local youth groups and other community health groups.

Funding

If available, below are potential funding sources specific to this Action. For a complete listing of potential funding opportunities to assist with implementing Sustainable CT Actions, please visit the Sustainable CT Grants Portal, which is searchable by Action. Please also visit the Support for Your Town page for opportunities for technical assistance and other supports.

- Urban Act Grant Program
- Municipal Grant Program (MGP)
- 2021 Sustainable CT Community Match Fund

Resources

Toolkits, Calculators, Guidance Documents

- Department of Public Health, Smoke-Free Signs
- Tobacco-Control Legal Consortium
- Anti-Idling Efforts in Connecticut

Organizations and Relevant Programs

- Connecticut Department of Public Health
- American Lung Association
- American Heart Association
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Why This Matters

Even brief exposure to secondhand smoke or emission from idling motor vehicle engines can potentially harm the respiratory and cardiovascular systems.

Benefits

Adopting smoke and tobacco-free policies will improve the health of people who live, work, and play in your community by improving air quality.

CT Success Stories

- Bristol - Jun 2020 Certification
- Guilford - Oct 2019 Certification
- New Haven - Oct 2019 Certification
- Vernon - Oct 2019 Certification
- Bristol - Oct 2020 Certification
- Meriden - Oct 2020 Certification
- New Canaan - Oct 2020 Certification
- Old Lyme - Oct 2020 Certification
- Old Saybrook - Oct 2020 Certification
- Milford - Jun 2021 Certification