

LANCASTER COUNTY'S JOURNEY TO BECOMING TOBACCO-FREE

The Lancaster County Health & Wellness Commission (HWC) worked for years to help Lancaster County achieve smokefree status in 2013 and tobacco-free status in 2020. Below are the major milestones contributing to the successful outcome. HWC is made up of all volunteers with no paid staff and meets every other month or, for special meetings, at the call of the Chair.

MARCH 10, 2010

Members of the HWC, along with a County Council Member reviewed the smokefree ordinance that the City of Rock Hill had recently passed. There was discussion regarding how it could apply in Lancaster County as well as brainstorming about how to garner support.

JULY 14, 2010

HWC receives detailed input from SC DHEC concerning specific talking points focusing on businesses and workplaces and the detrimental effects of secondhand smoke. Health care costs related to smoking related diseases was also addressed. A petition and letters of support were created to garner support. Businesses were approached to see if they would display “no smoking” signs on their property. HWC works with the Lancaster County School District to develop a Great American Smokeout Essay Contest with students. HWC members decide who will approach various stakeholders to ask them to put their support in writing.

FEBRUARY 8, 2012

County Council champion involves County Attorney to ensure the language of the proposed ordinance is acceptable.

AUGUST 27, 2012

The 1st reading of the Lancaster County ordinance occurred.

SEPTEMBER, 2012

The 2nd reading of the Lancaster County ordinance occurred on September 10, and a public hearing was held on September 24. In the weeks leading up to this, the HWC members made a final PR push to show support. Flyers were designed to recognize businesses that have gone smoke-free. Signs that read “Proud to be Smoke Free” were delivered to businesses that have already adopted a smoke-free policy. Other documents include:

- Informative letters to businesses
- Petitions with numerous signatures
- Letters to County Council
- 2010 and 2011 Great American Smoke Out Essay Contest with Students
- Progress report to county council
- Letter to the Editor
- Non-smoking informational flyer survey
- Economic Impact of Clean Indoor Air Laws- 3/15/2012
- Summerville Journal Scene 6/14/2011
- Letters to the mayors and to businesses/agencies in 2011
- Smoke-free talking points
- Copies of ordinances
- Letters of support excel spreadsheet
- Lancaster County FAQ's
- Use existing phone line for smoke-free support line
- Lancaster H&W Position Statement 4/16/2010
- Smokefree Communities Toolkit
- Church support letters
- Smoking ban FAQ's and unconstitutional FAQ's

NOVEMBER 26, 2012

The 3rd reading of the Lancaster County ordinance occurred on October 22. The ordinance passed with a vote of 4-2.

DECEMBER 12, 2012

Now that the tobacco-free ordinance passed, the HWC and the County Administrator discuss education efforts for the public and businesses. Efforts included:

- Sign delivered to businesses that says “Proud to be Smoke Free” (10/2013)
- A flyer designed to recognize businesses that have gone smoke-free, as well as a complaint notice (10/23)
- Another Great American Smokeout Contest that ran January 11 through 17, 2016.

MARCH 1, 2013

The Lancaster County Smokefree ordinance 2012-1167 goes into effect.

JUNE 13, 2013

HWC publicly thanks County Council for passing the ordinance.

MARCH 19, 2014

HWC receives recognition from the SC Tobacco-free Collaborative about being the first county in South Carolina to put a comprehensive smoking ordinance in place.

OCTOBER/DECEMBER, 2014

HWC reviewed a copy of a model ordinance prohibiting smoking that includes a reference to e-cigarettes. Concerns expressed that if the current ordinance is revised to include e-cigarettes, there may be backlash from opponents and the outcome might not be positive. HWC decides to table revisiting the current smoking ordinance for now.

FEBRUARY, 2019

HWC agrees to pursue updated policies and to pursue the three remaining entities needed to achieve tobacco-free status. HWC worked with DHEC to understand the difference between smokefree and tobacco-free and gathered the right language/sample policies to include e-cigarettes. In conjunction to policy updates, the HWC worked on educating and informing the community on the dangers of e-cigarettes. Relevant materials in 2019-2020 included

- World No Tobacco Day Flyers
- My Quit Plan (Tailored SC DHEC's Quit plan - April 3, 2019)
- E-cigarette Brochure (April 16, 2019)
- Juul Flyer
- TF Signs
- E-cigarette PP presentations (DHEC, Jim Thrasher, Truth Initiative, Irini's PP etc.)
- 100% TF Snapshot Profile
- Tobacco Survey Monkey Poll (March 2019)
- Official TF Press release + article (August 18, 2020)
- Letter to the Editor on E-Cigarettes in Lancaster News and Carolina Gateway (Nov 2019)
- Presentation to Lancaster County Council (October 2020)
- Tobacco-Free Memos and Thank You Memos to County Council, USCL, LCSD, and Van Wyck.
- DHEC gifted HWC with TF signs for partners and a billboard
- We are Tobacco-Free Lancaster Video: H&W Commission Members (August 6, 2020)

HWC also educated and Informed policymakers on local, state, and federal policy updates regarding tobacco, such as S. 492 preemption bill, T21, Section 59-1-380 regarding school districts, and ban on flavors.

APRIL 29, 2019

Lancaster County Council has 1st reading of Ordinance 2019-1590 regarding Amending Section 23-52 of the Lancaster County Code Related to Smoking to include e-cigarettes, which passes unanimously.

MAY 13, 2019

Lancaster County Council has 2nd reading of Ordinance 2019-1590 regarding Amending Section 23-52 of the Lancaster County Code Related to Smoking to include e-cigarettes, which passes unanimously.

MAY 28, 2019

Lancaster County Council has 3rd reading of Ordinance 2019-1590 regarding Amending Section 23-52 of the Lancaster County Code Related to Smoking to include e-cigarettes, which passes unanimously.

DECEMBER 2019

The Lancaster satellite campus of the University of South Carolina passed a tobacco-free policy.

MAY 6, 2020

Tobacco-free ordinance for the Town of Van Wyck passed.

JULY 28, 2020

The Lancaster County School District passes a tobacco-free policy, causing Lancaster County to be the first 100% tobacco-free county. A public information campaign is developed with signage, billboards, etc.