

Build a Healthier Bethel Fact Sheet



If enacted, the sugary beverage tax would:

- Add a one cent per ounce tax on distributors of sugary beverages, like fruit and energy drinks, sweetened tea and pop.
 - No tax on water, 100% fruit juice, milk, formula, unsweetened coffee and tea, and other beverages with no added sugars

What Bethel will gain:

- Funding for projects like:
 - the Phase II/community gym expansion of the YKFC
 - current and expanded operations and programming of the YKFC
 - the development and maintenance of Bethel parks, recreation and trails
 - the potential to use funds for future drinking water-related projects in the City of Bethel
- Designated revenue for projects that are often cut in local budgets

Why a tax on sugary beverages is a good idea:

- Sugary beverages, like sports, fruit and energy drinks and pop, are the leading source of added sugars in the American diet.¹
- Unlike other products high in added sugars, sugary beverages offer no nutritional value.
- Alaskans drink a lot of sugary beverages:
 - Almost 50% of Alaskan high school students and about 23% of Alaskan adults drink one or more sugary beverages each day²
 - Among Yup'ik youth, sugary beverages contribute more than 75% of beverage consumption, while consumption of milk and 100% fruit juice is low³
 - 31% of Alaskan three-year-old's drink some amount of sugary beverages each day⁴
- Drinking too many sugary beverages can raise the risk of tooth decay, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure.⁵
 - Each additional serving of sugary drinks per day increases the risk of type 2 diabetes by 13-18%.⁶
- In other cities, sugary beverage taxes have proven to be effective at reducing purchases⁷ and excise taxes do not hurt local business or increase unemployment.⁸

¹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 8th Edition. December 2015. Available at: https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/resources/2015-2020_Dietary_Guidelines.pdf

² 2017 BRFSS, 2019 YRBS

³ Characterizing Beverage Patterns Among Alaska Natives Living in Rural, Remote Communities: The CANHR Study (unpublished data).

⁴ 2018 Alaska Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey

⁵ Muth ND, Dietz WH, Magge SN, Johnson RK; American Academy of Pediatrics, Section on Obesity, Committee on Nutrition; American Heart Association. Public policies to reduce sugary drink consumption in children and adolescents. *Pediatrics*. 2019;143:e20190282. doi: 10.1542/peds.2019-0282

⁶ Imamura F, O'Connor L, Ye Z, Mursu J, Hayashino Y, Bhupathiraju SN, Forouhi NG. Consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, artificially sweetened beverages, and fruit juice and incidence of type 2 diabetes: systematic review, meta-analysis, and estimation of population attributable fraction. *BMJ*. 2015; 351. doi: 10.1136/bmj.h3576

⁷ Krieger J, Bleich SN, Scarmo S, Ng SW. Sugar-sweetened beverage reduction policies: progress and promise. *Ann Rev Public Health*. 2020; Nov 30. doi: 10.1146/annurev-publhealth-090419-103005.

⁸ [The impact of the Philadelphia beverage tax on employment: A synthetic control analysis - PubMed \(nih.gov\)](#)

How you can help:

E-mail city council members and tell them to support the sugary beverage tax and:

- Use funding for the Phase II community gym expansion of the YKFC along with development and maintenance of Bethel parks, recreation and trails
- Amend the sugary beverages ordinance to reduce the proposed tax on powdered beverages, like Tang
- Accept the recommendations from the Parks, Recreation, Aquatic Health and Safety Center committee

Learn more at BuildAHealthierBethel.org