

## Cigarette — Puyuruaq

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Puyuruanilu englumni!—Don't smoke in my house!

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Photo: Fishermen taking a smoke break on the dock in Ouzinkie, 2020. AM905

Tobacco was introduced to the Alutiiq by Russian entrepreneurs. Traders imported this commodity in large quantities for use as payment and provisions for Native hunters and laborers. An 1833 report on Kodiak area settlements by Vasilii Ivanovich Kashevaroff, the son of a Russian merchant and an employee of the Russian American Company, mentions tobacco frequently. According to Kashevaroff, Native hunters leaving Kodiak Harbor for the annual sea otter hunt were issued one and a half pounds of tobacco each if they used their own boats. Tobacco was also available in stores, used to pay hunters for hides, and included in the rations given to workers at Russian forts. Some workers received a pound of tobacco per month!

Alutiiq people made *iqmik*, a snuff of crushed tobacco leaves and wood ash, from most of the tobacco imported by Russian entrepreneurs.

Smoking didn't gain popularity until the mid 1800s, when people began using imported clay pipes. Cigarettes likely arrived later. Although cigarettes became popular in the United States in the early 1800s, they were not widely available until the time of the civil war.

Alutiiq words for tobacco, tobacco products, and smoking paraphernalia all come from the root word for smoke *puyur-*. Smoking tobacco is *puyuruarka* in Alutiiq. *Puyuruaq*—kind of like smoke, is the term for cigarette or cigar. A tobacco pouch is *puyuruarkaun*, literally a container for tobacco, and the word for marijuana is *puyuruaruaq*, kind of like a cigarette.