

Cliffside Park officials mulling smoking ban in parks - NorthJersey.com NorthJersey.com

Cliffside Park officials are considering an ordinance to ban smoking in the town's public parks.

Concerns for the potential effects of second-hand smoke to individuals and the environment have occasioned an investigation of the issue.

Councilman Thomas Calabrese introduced the ordinance with a first reading Oct. 16, and a second reading was originally scheduled for the Nov. 13 council meeting.

Damage sustained at the Municipal Building as a result of Hurricane Sandy resulted in the postponement of that monthly meeting.

A second reading of the smoke free parks ordinance is now scheduled for Nov. 19, when the council will meet in temporary quarters at the Senior Activity Center as its municipal building chambers are repaired from storm damage.

Calabrese, who serves as liaison to the Recreation and Parks Departments said "I am proud of the various improvements that Cliffside Park has made to its parks. The passage of this ordinance will further enhance usage of our recreational space for all the residents of [the borough]."

According to Karen Blumenfeld, executive director of Global Advisors Smoke Free Policy (GASP), a tobacco control policy and legal resource center, 11 other Bergen County municipalities already have 100 percent smoke free parks and recreational areas. Those towns are Carlstadt, Closter, East Rutherford, Elmwood Park, Franklin Lakes, Lyndhurst, Mahwah Township, Moonachie, Paramus, Ridgefield and River Vale.

Blumenfeld advises that more than 150 towns in New Jersey restrict smoking in public parks and that 40 towns across the state restrict outdoor smoking at entrances and exits of municipal buildings.

Additionally, Blumenfeld said, "Across the Hudson River, all New York City parks and recreational areas, including the beaches, boardwalks and marinas, are 100 percent smoke free."

GASP believes these ordinances help reduce the likelihood of children starting to smoke and also decrease smoking waste, which, in turn, reduces maintenance costs at municipal parks.

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