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## Franklin Lakes expands anti-smoking ordinance

DECEMBER 25, 2014 LAST UPDATED: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 2014, 1:21 AM

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THE RECORD

FRANKLIN LAKES — Smokers looking to light up in parks, recreational facilities and public buildings in town will have to look elsewhere. The Borough Council, citing public health risks, has unanimously adopted an ordinance banning smoking in those places.

Violators of the ban, which includes e-cigarettes, will be subject to a fine of \$250 for the first offense, \$500 for the second offense and \$1,000 for each subsequent offense.

The ban expands Franklin Lake's previous restrictions on smoking, which include a 2007 ordinance banning smoking on recreational fields, except parking areas. State law already bans smoking in public buildings, and a 2008 ordinance banned tobacco product use by anyone under the age of 19 in public areas owned or leased by Franklin Lakes.

"It also expanded restrictions in the sense that it covers electronic cigarettes as well," Borough Administrator Gregory Hart said.

Electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, are cigarette-shaped smoking devices containing a nicotine-based liquid that users vaporize and inhale.

The increased use of e-cigarettes is worrying public health officials across the country, as little is known about their long-term risk and the effects of secondhand exposure. Though smoking use continues to decline, e-cigarette use among teenagers has surpassed their use of traditional cigarettes, according to a federal National Institute on Drug Abuse survey released last week.

All six trustees voted last Tuesday in favor of the ban, which also prohibits smoking or carrying lighted tobacco within the public areas on certain streets, including Arbor Road, Hobar Court and Parsons Pond Road. The ban does not include smoking or carrying lighted tobacco in a moving motor vehicle on those streets.

The Borough Council took up the ordinance at the suggestion of the Board of Health, which said the borough would be eligible for free "100% smoke-free" signs for parks and recreational areas. The money for the signage comes from a state Department of Health program aimed at increasing the number of municipalities that pass tobacco-free ordinances.

As of this fall, 31 municipalities in Bergen County have banned smoking in parks and recreational areas, joining the more than 250 municipalities across New Jersey with such bans. Governor Christie recently vetoed a bill banning smoking in public parks and beaches, saying the measure would be "one size fits all."

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