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Hillsdale plans to add e-cigarettes to revised tobacco ordinance

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HILLSDALE – The Borough Council is rewriting an ordinance that would raise the legal age for buying tobacco products so it includes electronic smoking devices.

In July, the council voted unanimously to introduce an ordinance to raise the minimum age to purchase cigarettes and similar products to 19 from 18. The borough's ordinance has been superseded by a state law that set the age to 19 in 2006.

Borough Attorney Mark Madaio said Hillsdale was contacted by Global Advisors on Smokefree Policy, or GASP, a non-profit organization, last week about including electronic cigarettes and other similar devices in the ordinance to reflect state law.

Council members agreed at their meeting on Aug. 11 that they wanted to add e-cigarettes to the ordinance. "Whenever you have any significant changes between introduction and adaption, you are supposed to reintroduce," Madaio said. "I'd rather take it back, add the electronic smoking devices, possibly a good definition from the state statute about what they are, and then we can move forward with a new clean ordinance."

Karen Blumenfeld, the executive director of GASP, said the organization reached out to Hillsdale because the group's research indicates electronic cigarettes pose a health risk.

"Many studies show health issues with using and being exposed to smoke from electronic smoking devices, and ingredients in many of the products contain hazardous and even carcinogenic chemicals," she said.

The ordinance is expected to be reintroduced at the Borough Council's next meeting on Sept. 1.

<http://www.northjersey.com/news/hillsdale-to-add-e-cigarette-restriction-1.1395431>