

Bloomingdale council enacting smoking ban

By Deborah Walsh
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BLOOMINGDALE - With smoking being prohibited at the workplace, restaurants and many public places for the past decade or so in New Jersey, borough officials had wrongly assumed that Bloomingdale had a law on its books that banned smoking at municipal facilities. Now that it's the wiser, the governing body will consider an ordinance to snuff out smoking at municipal facilities.

At its Sept. 6 meeting, the Borough Council introduced an ordinance that prohibits smoking in municipal buildings and vehicles and within a 25-foot radius of all municipal buildings' entrances and exits. The ordinance is scheduled for a public hearing and adoption on Sept. 20.

Mayor Jonathan Dunleavy said there was an assumption that an ordinance that covered all borough facilities had been adopted during former Mayor Craig Ollenschleger's administration. Ollenschleger, who served as mayor from 1999 to 2006, worked with Bloomingdale's Municipal Alliance to have smoking prohibited at municipal recreation facilities, and the ordinance adopted during his tenure only covered recreational facilities and not all municipal buildings. Municipal alliances sponsor programs to prevent the use and abuse of alcohol and drugs, including nicotine, and promote positive decision-making.

The ordinance bars smoking at parks, recreation facilities, and municipal buildings (defined as all structures owned, leased, rented and/or operated by the borough and/or occupied by municipal employees and used for official business of the borough).

The ordinance bars smoking at parks and recreation facilities, which are described as all public parks, playgrounds, and ball fields publicly owned or leased by the Borough of Bloomingdale, and all property owned or leased by the borough upon which the public is invited or upon which the public is permitted and where individuals gather for recreational activities, including all areas adjacent to such facilities such as parking areas, driveways, or drive aisles.

Additionally, smoking is banned at municipal buildings, which are defined as all structures owned, leased, rented and/or operated by the borough and/or occupied by its employees and used for official municipal business. The ordinance requires that the borough install "No-Smoking" signs of the international no-smoking signal (consisting of a pictorial representation of a burning cigarette enclosed in a red circle with a diagonal red line through its cross section). The signs will be clearly, sufficiently, and conspicuously posted at each municipal building entrance (front/rear) and within each closed area where smoking is prohibited.

Employees and visitors to the municipal building will also not be able to go immediately outside the front or rear entrance/exit of the municipal building to have a smoke because smoking is prohibited within a 25-foot radius of the front and back doors of municipal facilities. Signs will be posted. Smoking will also be prohibited in municipal vehicles.

"We're so proud of Bloomingdale for wanting to ensure that its municipal properties are free from the hazards of secondhand smoke, especially in parks and playgrounds where children are present," said Karen Blumenfeld, executive director of Global Advisors on Smoke-free Policy. "The state law requires no outdoor smoking if it enters into a smoke-free public place or workplace whether it's privately or publicly owned, so we are glad that the town is interested in creating a smoke-free buffer zone for government buildings."

Dunleavy said Police Chief Joseph Borell recommended the adoption of an ordinance solidifying the smoking ban. The Police Department is charged with enforcing the ordinance. The proposed law provides a fine ranging from \$50 to \$200 for violators.

Under the terms of the ordinance, smoking is prohibited in public places, which are defined as any building or enclosed structure located within the Borough of Bloomingdale that is open to the public, and any street, road, sidewalk, walkway, park, playground, borough recreational facility, school ground or open space located within Bloomingdale that is open to the public.

<http://www.northjersey.com/community-news/town-government/bloomingdale-council-enacting-smoking-ban-1.1656846>