



NYC eyes electronic cigarette ban in public spaces

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By: [Jeff Morganteen](#) | Producer, CNBC.com

James Gennaro, NYC councilman, D-Queens, discusses the proposed bill that will ban e-cigarettes in public places in New York City. Gennaro believes the electronic cigarette renormalizes smoking. **See 12/4/13 interview at <http://www.cnbc.com/id/101247181>**

Electronic cigarette smokers be warned: The time of smoking in New York City bars and restaurants without consequence may soon come to an end.

The New York City Council turned its sights on electronic cigarettes during a public hearing Wednesday morning to discuss whether to ban them from restaurants and public places, such as parks and beaches, the same way the city treats traditional tobacco products.

*(Read more: **[Dutch sound alarm about possible risks of e-cigarettes](#)**)*

Councilman James Gennaro, D-Queens, told CNBC on Wednesday that science remained inconclusive on whether vapor from the e-cigarettes presented safety risks to nearby nonsmokers. Instead of tobacco, the battery-powered e-cigarettes ignite a flavored liquid and users inhale vapor rather than smoke.

*(Read more: **[E-cigarette sales are smoking hot at \\$1.7 billion](#)**)*

Gennaro, the lead sponsor of the bill banning public use of e-cigarettes now before the council, said he wanted to "err on the side of caution." He added that the city's measures to ban smoking from outdoor public areas under Mayor Michael Bloomberg were more about public acceptance of smoking than science.

"Those second set of measures were more about sociology and denormalizing than they were hard medical science," Gennaro said on "**[Squawk on the Street](#)**." "We thought it was important to make sure smoking was completely denormalized."

In the meantime, electronic cigarettes make up a booming business that could surpass \$1.7 billion this year, analyst Bonnie Herzog of Wells Fargo Securities told CNBC in August. The surge in popularity also comes amid cries for more regulation, at both the federal and local levels.