

Council wants all parks in Garfield to go smoke-free

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BY KRISTIE CATTAFI

STAFF WRITER

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Garfield took the first steps to make all city public parks and facilities smoke-free by introducing an ordinance amending the city code.

The ordinance, introduced at the Feb. 26 council meeting, states smoking will be prohibited in all public parks and recreation facilities owned or leased by the city and all property owned or leased by the city where the public is invited or individuals gather for recreation activities, including any parking areas or driveways.

The ordinance also prohibits smoking in all municipal buildings and within a 35 ft. radius of the front entrance of all municipal buildings, or in any car registered by the city. Each no smoking area will have no smoking signs and indicate that violators will be subject to a fine.

Violations and penalties include a fine no less than \$250 for the first offense, \$500 for the second offense and \$1,000 for each subsequent offense.

The ordinance was introduced after the mayor and council met with the Bergen County Integrated Municipal Advisory Council, a coalition of tobacco control experts from New Jersey and community organizations from Bergen County. Community Tobacco Program Coordinator Albert Ferrara presented information to the city along with other towns that have passed similar ordinances.

Although the ordinance states that enforcement of the ordinance will be done by the police, fire, recreation, public works and health departments, Ferrara said in other towns residents self police and will tell other people who are smoking that it is a smoke-free zone.

Mayor Joseph Delaney said that he is 100-percent behind smoke-free areas and that it is a quality of life issue. City Manager Tom Duch said there have been some problems at the Astroturf fields in the city with cigarette butts and that the field has been singed from cigarettes.

Ferrara said once city officials adopt the smoke-free ordinance the organization will provide Garfield with as many smoke-free area signs that it wants for free.

Email: cattafi@northjersey.com

http://www.northjersey.com/news/bergen/195314851_Council_wants_all_parks_in_Garfield_to_go_smoke-free.html